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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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Vol. XXX. No. 756. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1945 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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SPEAK FOR ENGLAND

THERE are moments in history when public opinion leaps ahead of the experts, when utopianism becomes the only practical policy, and simplicity wisdom. These moments—the turning points which decide the destiny of generations—are rare. They occur when something happens which outdates decisively all the forms of political and strategic thought and the administrative procedures within which the statesman, the civil servant, and the general are accustomed to shape their policy. When this happens, the man in the street becomes wiser than the politician: his vision is not blinded by intricacies of statecraft now irrelevant.

Public opinion in this country, we believe, is almost unanimous in demanding that the control of Atomic Armaments should be vested in a World Security Organisation and that national armaments should be outlawed. Ten days ago such a proposal would rightly have been dismissed as utopian. To-day, whatever the Foreign Office and the General Staff may say, it is matter-of-fact statesmanship. Science has taken a gigantic leap forward: statesmanship must not be permitted to shuffle along behind. The peoples of the world, appalled out of their weary acceptance of things as they are, will accept the boldest proposals without hesitation. But their mood of expectancy, their readiness for innovation, will not last long. If we are not to miss the revolutionary opportunity, the revolution must be accomplished at once.

No one appreciates this mood of the people more profoundly than Mr. Attlee. He knows that this country voted Labour not merely in order to substitute one group of politicians for another, but because it felt that a new type of government was needed for a new age. We said "No" to Toryism, precisely because we felt the ruling caste, with all its experience and habits of mind, was out of date; that ordinary men and women, like ourselves, with a moral view of politics, were better suited to solve our present problems than the cynical "realists" who let us drift into the humiliations and disasters of 1938-41.

This country is in a unique position. Closely united with America, we share the secrets of the atomic bomb. But, a small island off the coast of Europe, we are physically prevented from manufacturing it; and, like every other Western European country, we would be smashed beyond recovery were it used against us. Unlike the two great Continental States, we can speak for all the smaller peoples of the world.

We believe, therefore, that Mr. Attlee should at once, after consultation with the Dominion Premiers, declare the readiness of this country to vest in the World Security Council full and unconditional control of the whole future development of atomic energy, and of all other armaments. On the basis of this statement he should then invite the representatives of all the members of the Council to a conference in London, at which the outline plan for the necessary military and technical organisation should be prepared.

Political wiseacres will find a thousand objections to this proposal. "The Potsdam Conference has just finished. The statesmen are too busy to meet again." Too busy to prevent a world catastrophe? "The Japanese surrender demands daily and hourly supervision." Yes, but what is the good of destroying Japanese militarism, only to prepare the ground for an atomic struggle between America and Russia? "The conference may fail and British prestige suffer a reverse?" Are we to refuse even to attempt to solve the crisis for fear of failing?

There is no doubt that such objections will be raised. Simplicity, the hall-mark of great statesmanship, always appears folly to the conventional politician. We earnestly hope that Mr. Attlee will disregard the timidity of such advisers and, trusting in the moral courage which he has always shared with the ordinary people of this country, will speak for England—and for the world.

The King's Speech

The remarkable coincidence of the surrender of Japan and the opening of the first Socialist Parliament at Westminster had the effect of emphasising the national character of the Labour Movement and the continuity of British tradition. A Socialist King's Speech was introduced amidst scenes of rejoicing for a national victory, and the triumph of Labour was celebrated amid royal, imperial and religious ceremonies. There is no matter for concern in this; indeed, there is much tactical advantage in gathering national sentiment round the Labour Government, provided that the resolution to carry out the programme remains firm.

The King's Speech is to be regarded as a single Session's programme of legislation designed to make long overdue adjustments in our economy. This programme is to be viewed in the setting of the atomic bomb—San Francisco must now be drastically revised—and the necessity of saving Europe from famine and pestilence by rapidly transferring to the purposes of relief the shipping, transport and materials that are released from war. Once this is understood, we see that the Labour proposals (apart from the decision to repeal outright the vengeful Trades Disputes Act of 1927) are a recognition of technical necessities. We can no longer afford the strife and inefficiency of the privately owned coal mines. Since the Government must direct credit and production policy, it also rightly gives priority to legislation to bring the Bank of England under public control and to set up a National Investment Board. It will also maintain essential "controls." Housing is the first of domestic needs, and legislation is needed for land purchase and Town and Country Planning. New laws will be necessary to carry out the "Beveridge" insurance scheme and to create a National Medical Service. Life has to be given to the skeleton of the Education Act of 1944. There may be some feeling that the Speech neglects the increase of old-age pensions and other relief measures that many M.P.s have promised. But Labour has been right to concentrate on the great constructive changes.

In countering opposition, which, as the first Parliamentary debate shows, will be strenuous and partisan, the Government has the great advantage of having won the election on a specific and practical programme. The public voted for a New Deal; if the Government is as good as its word, it is as sure to retain confidence as Mr. Roosevelt's Party in 1932.

American Power

In his broadcast to his people on his return from Potsdam President Truman spoke as the victor proud, and it may be over-proud, of the immense power his country wields. He made it clear that America means to consolidate it. First, she will "maintain the bases necessary for the complete protection of our interests and of world peace." Secondly, she will acquire any other bases "which our military experts deem to be essential for our protection." This section of his speech was obviously drafted to satisfy the well-known demands of the Navy Department. Of their present relevance, the decision to halt the new naval construction programme is evidence enough. The President indicated in passing that the secret of the atomic bomb had not been communicated to the U.S.S.R. during the Potsdam conversations, and went on to say that "we must constitute ourselves trustees of this new force" and that the secret will not be revealed "until means have been found to control the bomb, so as to protect ourselves and the rest of the world from total destruction." Nothing in the speech suggested that he has as yet any definite plan of international control in his mind, and Mr. Churchill's speech in the House was equally barren. Most of Mr. Truman's speech was a commentary on the Potsdam plan for Germany. What was new was that in his advocacy of the international control of European waterways, he included the Turkish Straits. Taking account of the fact that the U.S.A. is represented for the first time at the Conference on Tangier and now claims a voice in the control of the Dardanelles, it is clear that her strategical interests now extend to the Mediterranean.

A Mass Migration

The Polish Government appears to be paying no attention to the agreement of the Big Three at Potsdam that the expulsion of the German population from the Eastern Provinces of the Reich must be "effected in an orderly and humane manner," and in the meanwhile should be suspended. The correspondent of *The Times* in Berlin reports that the mass migration continues, and that these people are dying by the roadside. A barge arrived in Berlin from Stettin with 40 women and 700 children "all of whom were starving": several of the children died in hospital. The Poles give these miserable peoples at most 30 minutes in which to pack and quit. If the Poles look to the West for help for their own people from U.N.R.R.A., they must be given to understand that they in turn must conform to elementary standards of humanity. If this mass expulsion is tolerated, while there are still 1,500,000 "displaced persons" (chiefly Poles and Russians) on German soil, the immediate problem of feeding this swollen population will become insoluble. On a longer view, any final settlement will have to face the fact that if this territorial compensation is to be granted to Poland, with the result that the Reich will have a density of population somewhere between that of Britain and Belgium, then the present large-scale removal of machinery must be drastically reduced. Unlike Mr. Churchill, we have consistently opposed these frontiers and mass expulsions.

British and French Socialists

The applause with which the British Labour delegation was greeted by the French Socialist Party Congress was a sincere tribute both to this country and to the victory of the Labour Party at the polls. But there were special reasons for Léon Blum and his colleagues to welcome the presence of a Labour Party delegation. The Congress had to decide on its attitude to the Communist proposals for fusion—now rejected, although a joint committee has been established—and M. Blum, not unnaturally, exploited to the full the presence of representatives of the most powerful member of the Second International. Whether it was wise for the Labour Party to permit itself to become deeply involved in a French internal issue is quite another matter. To-day the Communists are without question the most virile and best organised of the French working-class parties, and seem to have reached an understanding with as shrewd a politician as M. Herriot, who obviously sees in them the strongest available safeguard against any dictatorial tendencies on the part of General de Gaulle. Many of the Socialists, on the other hand, largely out of fear of the growing Communist strength, have drifted into a position of anxious support for the General. In this delicate situation, unrestricted support by the Labour Party for M. Blum and his colleagues may well defeat its object. The Communists can be reckoned on to exploit to the full any rumours of British "interference" to strengthen their own position as a truly "national" party. Looking further ahead it would be tragic if, after the elections next October, we found that British Labour, by its commitments to Léon Blum and his party, had prejudiced Anglo-French relations.

Spain: What Next?

General Franco must now realise that the days of his dictatorship are numbered. On the heels of Labour's victory in Britain came the sharp declaration from Potsdam, debarring Spain from membership of the United Nations until the Caudillo has left the scene. Can he still hope for credit and shipments of commodities in short supply from a Labour Ministry? Diplomatic relations, too, are unlikely to outlast the formation of a strong Republican Government in Mexico. The leaders of all Republican political parties and organisations, from the Catholics and most moderate Liberals and Socialists to the Communist Party and the Anarchist "National Confederation of Workers," have now reached agreement on the basis of the Constitution of 1931, with the autonomous "Statutes" for Catalonia and the Basque Country, approved by the "Cortes." The technical difficulty created by the fact that the Presidency of the Republic is vacant since Sr. Azaña's death in 1940, is apparently to be solved by a special meeting of the "Cortes" to be held in Mexico very shortly, in which the speaker, Sr. Martinez Barrio, will, in conformity with the Constitution, be sworn as Acting President of the Republic. An administration will then be set up which will be recognised as the legal and constitutional Government of Spain by Republicans of all tendencies. It seems probable that Dr. Negrin, who brought this plan to Mexico, will be Prime Minister of this new Government. British Labour is committed to the restoration of Spanish democracy: it can be most effective now the Spanish democrats have begun to sink their differences.

The Tough and the Silly

King Peter's petulant indictment of the Tito regime has produced the surprising announcement from Belgrade that, with the appointment of the three Regents, the King has surrendered his prerogatives until a Constituent Assembly has reached a definitive decision on the constitutional issue. From a formal standpoint this is questionable; but there can be no doubt that King Peter has finally burnt his boats by this violent repudiation of Tito and the National Liberation Movement. Tito is playing a tough game. The King's démarche came at a moment when a large-scale amnesty and relaxation of censorship and other security measures had been announced. How far will such promises be implemented? If we remember the lesson of the Russian Revolution, we shall understand that the degree of freedom which exists in a revolutionary state is directly proportional to the extent to which the new regime believes itself to be endangered. Conflicting forces are at work in the new Yugoslavia; alongside far-reaching agrarian reform, nationalisation of certain types of property—including that of the two main churches—and the reorganisation of the machinery of government, we have demands for reparations from both Germany and Italy and for territorial adjustments. Yugoslavia has a title to the assistance of the United Nations but her new rulers should learn that opinion in the democracies—predisposed to sympathy—may be alienated by rash or extravagant policy.

Railwaymen's Wages

Though the Sunday strikes in the North—product of six years' intense strain made worse by the holiday scramble—still go on, the agreement reached between the three railway unions and the Railway Executive on basic rates of pay, Sunday overtime rates and holidays seems likely to lead to an all-round settlement of immediate post-war conditions on the railways. The N.U.R. has not got the 90*s.* minimum nor the 40-hour week; but the new minima—87*s.* in London, 85*s.* in industrial and 84*s.* in rural areas—represent an advance of 7*s.* a week; Sunday overtime (the vexed issue in the North) is raised from time and a half to time and three-quarters; and, next year, the wages grades will get 12 days' holiday (instead of six) with pay. Provided the differential rates and workshop wages are brought fairly into line, the railwaymen will probably accept this result of hard bargaining as "good enough to go on with." But, when the railways are nationalised, the problem of fixing fair rates of remuneration for the employees is likely to require a new form of wage machinery. The cost of rail transport has an important bearing on full employment and the national economy. Even when railway shareholders' interests have no longer to be considered, railway wages (still modest enough) will have to be related to factors outside the normal, sectional purview of unions and managers.

The Government and Cotton

Employers in the cotton industry have now no ground for arguing that their post-war planning is handicapped by political uncertainty. Cotton, of course, did not figure in the Labour Party's election list of industries to be nationalised in the life of this Parliament; but there was considerable doubt in Lancashire as to the conditions which the Government would be likely to impose in return for assisting the industry's reorganisation in private hands. Sir Stafford Cripps has wisely lost no time in defining the Government's policy. Briefly, it is that the cotton industry will receive "support" provided that it is ready to extend methods of joint consultation, to reform distribution arrangements, to meet the needs of modern machinery, where necessary, by double-shift working, to carry out needful amalgamations in the spinning section, and to re-equip mills with more up-to-date plant. On these terms, and provided that wages and conditions of work are made reasonably attractive, the Government promises to do all it can (short of direction) to encourage an inflow of labour into the industry (particularly into the spinning bottleneck), and to facilitate procurement of new machinery. The cotton employers, we are glad to note, admit that the present acute man-power shortage in the industry cannot be overcome by voluntary means unless wages are raised; and, once the existing world-wide scarcity of cotton goods has been overcome, Lancashire will be unable to withstand competition from the U.S.A. and the Far East unless its machinery and methods undergo radical modernisation. So much is clear. The point of doubt which remains, and which Sir Stafford has not dealt with, is whether private enterprise in cotton can attract the investment of capital needed for rehabilitation.

THE PATTERN OF ASIA

THE Mikado is a god and as such not bound by human obligations. The Allies were therefore right in refusing to make terms with him. They were right, too, in insisting that he should carry out their will; no one else can prevent further bloodshed by ordering Japan's armies to cease fighting, and in no other way is the belief in the Mikado's divinity so likely to be undermined. But surrender on the Potsdam terms confining the Japanese to the four islands which, for so many centuries before industrialisation, sufficed for a 30-million population, is only the first step. The political and economic problems which will follow the Japanese collapse are of terrifying complexity. Their dangers are dramatically illustrated by the unrepentant militarism of Japanese official statements since the surrender.

It is difficult enough to foster democracy in Germany, where at least the idea and the forms of free government are familiar. How much greater is the task which the Allies have set themselves when they assert that the Government of Japan shall "be established by the freely expressed will of the Japanese people", and promise to remove "all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people"! It would be wrong to deny the existence of such tendencies, since Japan went through a period in which moderate statesmen like Shidehara were at the head of the State, when Liberal and Socialist ideas were widely discussed, Western literature widely read and some expression given to democratic sentiment in the Social Mass Party. This Party, however, which won 37 seats in the Japanese Diet in the mid-thirties, was banned, as indeed all independent parties were, before Japan launched war against the West. At one time there were also many Japanese Communists, but the Party has always been illegal. To-day we have no evidence that "dangerous thoughts" (which had become criminal in their mildest Liberal form in the years before the war) now inspire any group strong enough to exercise authority. Japan has always been feudal, even though during the last two generations feudalism has been linked to great Capitalist monopolies. The Allies cannot permanently occupy Japan, and there may be serious differences of view among them about the "right type" of Japanese to regard as the best midwives of Japanese democracy. Though most of the real Liberals in Japan were long since murdered, it seems likely that the Americans will favour, as they have in Italy and Germany, "non-political" business men and Right-wing politicians, who regard the mildest Socialism as red revolution. Meanwhile, from Northern China something is likely to be heard of the claims of Japanese Communists who have been fighting against the Mikado. The best known of them is Okana, who escaped to Yenan, there to become the leader of those of his countrymen who have joined forces with the Chinese Red Army.

We are back, then, at the familiar situation in which democracy in the Russian usage means Socialism and a government of parties antagonistic to the old ruling class, while the United States means competitive capitalism. In Japan the danger arising from this conflict of view is greater even than in Germany. There are still large undefeated Japanese armies, the ruling class of Japan remains intact and her industries are only partially destroyed. The story of Weimar Germany could be easily repeated in Japan. If the Allies, having used the Mikado, fail to end his Dynasty, and allow Japanese industry to revive partly as a matter of business and partly as a make-weight or bulwark against Russia, we may find ourselves in a few years' time with a Japanese Hitler threatening the nominally liberal regime we have set up. Obviously it is essential not to bolster up the inspired authority of the Mikado; obviously agreement between Russia and the Western Allies in the policing, economic and political future of Japan and of Asia as a whole is urgently necessary. The argument would have been clear enough even before the discovery of atomic bombing; to-day, failure to reach agreement is race suicide.

The chances of Allied agreement are better than they look on the surface, and for the same reasons that have compelled at least the skeleton of agreement in Europe. Russia is now the ally of America, Britain and China in the Far East. Her entry into the war was long ago planned and, as Mr. Truman and Mr. Churchill have made clear, not a last-minute decision dictated by the atomic bomb. In any case criticism of Russia's policy is irrelevant to the main issue, since the task of freeing China of the Japanese and deciding what on earth to do with millions of Japanese troops who will surrender (though some may prefer to die) will fall upon the Russians as well as upon the Chinese, Americans and British. Similarly all the Allies will have to deal with the baffling economic problem that Japan will present when the Nippon Empire has collapsed. The whole of Asia and the Pacific is in the melting pot and joint Allied decisions must be made.

In the centre of the picture stands China. In her case political discussions have been proceeding for some time. They have now been renewed in Moscow between Stalin and T. V. Soong, now supported by Dr. Wang Shih-chieh, China's Foreign Minister, and have resulted in a formal treaty between Russia and China. No doubt the first results of these negotiations were discussed at Potsdam. Russia's economic hold over Outer Mongolia has long been recognised, and it is likely that Inner Mongolia, freed from the Japanese, will also look economically at least towards the Soviet Union. Sinkiang, far less important, is a controversial question; it was finally evacuated by the Russians in 1942. Manchuria and Korea present much larger and more dangerous issues. Manchuria has become the richest and most highly industrialised part of Asia, and though the Cairo Declaration of December 1st, 1943, fully acknowledged Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria, it is clear that both Russia and the United States now regard themselves as having a special interest there. Russia is expected once again to take over the Chinese Eastern Railway which she sold to Japan, and to take Port Arthur, which was ceded by the Tsarist Government after the war of 1904–5. She may also demand one or more warm water ports—always among the governing factors of Russian strategy. As for Korea, the cautious phraseology of the Cairo Declaration, signed by America, Great Britain and China, stated that these Powers were "determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent." How the process is to be achieved is not yet clear; a Provisional Government, headed by Mr. Kim Koo, has its headquarters in Chungking, whilst another skeleton government has been working in Yenan. There are also said to be some 2,000,000 Koreans in Manchuria, and the now urgent task of negotiating an agreement between Chinese Communists and the Kuomintang must include the creation of a unified Korean Government of Liberation.

Off the Asiatic Mainland there are a number of important Japanese islands which at the end of the war will be in Russian or American hands. Sakhalin, the northern half of which belonged to Russia before the war, will presumably fall to Soviet forces. It contains Japan's largest source of natural oil. The Kurile Islands, off the coast of Siberia, are usually regarded as falling within the Russian zone, whilst the Americans made clear at San Francisco their claim to a number of strategic islands of which the most important are Iwojima and Okinawa. But the dangers of parcelling out the strategic bases between these two great Northern Pacific Powers is immediately obvious. Sanity demands a United Nations agreement for the international control of all such strategic bases under the administration of the Security Council.

All these problems of North Asia are at once economic, political and strategic. They are the concern primarily of China, Russia and the United States. Similarly the problems of Southern Asia and the South Pacific are also economic, political and strategic, and in their even greater complexity they concern China, Britain, Australasia, Holland and the U.S.A., and, to a lesser extent, France. Once again overlapping interests are inevitable, and the choice is between rivalry and co-operation under the United Nations Organisation. Mr. Churchill once talked of an Asiatic Council to parallel the European Council, and, if he meant anything, he must have envisaged something better than the picture he evoked by his famous phrase about not presiding over the liquidation of the British Empire. Since this was in answer to a question about Hong Kong, it was regarded both in America and in China as a refusal to recognise the new aspirations of the Asiatic peoples and the necessity of co-operating with them. Mr. Bevin, who has some first-hand knowledge of these problems, showed a more imaginative grasp in his great speech at the Blackpool Conference. He understands the social and economic factors and is unlikely, for instance, to wish to retain Hong Kong (which in any case is indefensible and which was taken by force from China) or to regard Malaya as a territory for British exploitation. In the same way though De Gaulle has grandiloquently reasserted French claims in Indo-China, we doubt whether present-day France expects to return there with her old imperialist absolutism, and it is clear that Dutch rule in the Netherlands East Indies can only be restored under new conditions. No one has made a more determined effort to think afresh about these problems than Mr. Evatt, the Australian Foreign Minister, and Mr. Peter Fraser, New Zealand's Prime Minister. On the basis of their own economic agreement, Australia and New Zealand, under their present leaders, are actively seeking an international organisation to embrace the whole of the South Pacific area.

Here we have done no more than list a few of the innumerable problems that follow the collapse of Japan. For the future of the world the pattern of Asia has now become more important than that of Europe. Here are the great centres of population, the greatest sources of wealth, the greatest untapped markets, and probably the greatest dangers to world peace. At the centre is the problem of China. The worst that can happen is that China, paralysed at the centre, is divided into two vast and competing spheres of influence. In that case Russia, linked with the Chinese Communists in the North, would become the champion of the new economy and the most effective influence over one-half of China, while American business, which regards China as the greatest unexploited market in the world, would ally itself with reactionary Chinese forces. It is needless to enlarge on the perils of such a position. The alternative is unity in China and a general agreement among the Powers. The first necessity—unity in China—is in principle desired by America, the U.S.S.R. and Britain. A Chinese Government to end the present clashes between Chungking and Yenan and to represent all the progressive forces of China is now absolutely indispensable. With such a Government able to speak for China, the problem of creating an Asiatic Council to work together in settling the future of Asia would be immeasurably easier. As we survey this complex and stupendous panorama we are glad that the foreign policy of Britain is now in the hands of men whose approach is not that of traditional foreign offices. A purely political approach, which sees no farther than to re-establish Britain's past position, has become frivolous. Britain's "vital interests" in the Far East are to help raise the standard of living of exploited peoples (thereby incidentally creating new markets) and to ensue peace, not by seeking to restore old privileges, but by taking the lead in organising world security.

NEW FRONTIER OF THE MIND

The perfecting of the atomic bomb is only the first impressive practical utilisation of knowledge that appeared, almost as startlingly as the bomb itself, in the scientific world of fifty years ago. The discoveries of X-rays by Röntgen in 1895, and, later, of radio-activity by Becquerel, were totally unexpected; they broke up the complacent nineteenth-century, determinist, physical picture and started a major revolution in scientific theory. There followed the Rutherford theory of the atom, with its heavy nucleus and attendant electron, which showed us a picture of matter very different from our old concrete imaginings; while the quantum theory of Planck and Bohr revealed modes of behaviour of that matter even more different from common-sense experience. These ideas led to an almost unbroken sequence of discoveries—neutron, positron, meson—culminating just before the war with the splitting of the isotope of uranium which is the basis for the atomic bomb. The bomb itself is the first large-scale, practical result of fifty years of intense, fundamental scientific activity.

What the effect of the use of atomic energy is likely to be on society we can now only dimly see. Those who know most about it are prohibited by military secrecy from making any statement. I can only write about it because it is work in which I have at no time been involved. What is important now, however, is not an accurate presentation of the immediate, technical possibilities of the utilisation of processes in atomic nuclei, but rather an appreciation of the social effects which such utilisation is bound to produce. The first obvious and incontestable fact is that we have here a concentration of energy of the order of a million times greater than any we have had before. That does not mean, of course, that we have actually increased the available energy in this planet by any perceptible amount as yet. The rarity of the original elements, the practical difficulties of extraction of the active isotopes, and the unavoidable inefficiency of the disintegration process, may make the effective cost per energy unit for many years far greater than that of the more prosaic sources of coal and oil. We may feel reasonably sure, however, that the application of scientific analysis and practical ingenuity will overcome these difficulties in the course of a few years—if the effort made to achieve this result is maintained at the intensity it reached in the preparation of the atomic bomb.

Long before this time, however, there are obvious fields of utilisation for concentrated sources of energy such as the atomic bomb, even if considerably more expensive than coal or oil. Such sources would obviously be at a premium in all remote parts of the world where the cost of transport of coal or oil is great. It is there that atomic power will first be cheaper. It does not follow, however, that atomic energy in any case is best transformed into mechanical power. Long before this is achieved on an economic scale, we may be using atomic energy for the production of extremely high temperatures and pressures—for a new metallurgy and ceramics, and in large-scale engineering as a super-blasting agent. Already, in the availability of an enormous variety of radioactive elements in hitherto unthinkable quantities, we have means for the rapid increase of our chemical, biological and medical knowledge out of reach of all previous scientists. Sooner or later, moreover, it will be possible to use atomic power economically to provide directly or indirectly for immediate human wants. In the crudest way such energy can be used to pump water and to make fertiliser, thus both to extend and to intensify agricultural exploitation. At the same time, by increasing the facility of transport, energy can make agricultural products more rapidly available. This means, in effect, that the basic limitation of food supply, already being felt acutely in the world, will be removed.

The discovery of a new source of wealth does not imply its rapid, large-scale use. Columbus's landfall did not mean any immediate increase in the means of life of mediæval Europe, but it did open a New World, and, in time, that New World with its ever-widening frontier, brought an overwhelming increase in human population and standard of life. The development of the atomic bomb is another signal that a new frontier has opened, a frontier more illimitable than the physical frontier of mountain and prairie because it is not tied down to the geographical limitations of this globe, but only to the capacities of human intelligence and human ability to co-operate. Just as, when the New World was opened, the more adventurous of people could not be content with the constraints and resignations of the Old, so, from now on, men will have a reasonable impatience at being tied down by the physical limitations of older methods of production, and will demand the most rapid and the most effective development and exploitation of the new powers that science has put into our hands.

It is here that lies the way out of the very real horror and apprehension that the atomic bomb has created. Attempts to control this force by secrecy and by limitation are foredoomed to failure. The real way to ensure freedom from fear and suspicion is not such negative control but rapid expansion. Much of the troubles of our time, particularly in advanced countries like the United States, have been attributed to what is called the end of the age of expansion, the closing of the last frontier. With unlimited possibilities for expansion and open frontiers, mutual suspicion and struggles for *Lebensraum* will give way in a new, universal constructive effort full of excitement, uncertainty, hope and promise.

The analogy of the opening of the New World, however, must not be pushed too far. What America gave us was something that people were already acquainted with—lands, forests, mines—only more of them than they had ever dreamed of; our new resources are not in the physical world, but come from the systematic and cumulative tradition of science, and their benefits can only be realised by ordered and controlled progress.

Perhaps as impressive as the atomic bomb itself is the feat of scientific organisation and industrial production that made it possible in the course of three years to go from what was a laboratory experiment involving hardly more than home-made apparatus and sub-microscopic quantities of substance, to a practical release of energy on a scale thousands of times greater than ever before achieved. Social discoveries are intrinsically more important than physical ones. A new way of doing things has an indefinite future not tied to any particular field of knowledge. The overriding need to avoid a similar fate to what we have inflicted on our enemy has shown what many scientists have long believed: that the potentials of modern science were not being realised for the simple reason that insufficient effort was being put into science.

People had grown so accustomed to the multiplicity of ways in which science was affecting modern life that the majority—and many scientists—were content with the relatively small-scale and haphazard manner in which scientific research and its application was conducted. That method—or lack of method—is now dead. The object lesson of the two billion dollar expenditure on the atomic bomb, with its integration of scientific, industrial and military organisation, shows what can be achieved if such projects are tackled in a big way. There are hundreds of projects in science, already known to be realisable theoretically, much less spectacular but of comparable importance to the atomic bomb. We have had one example of them already in this war—the development of penicillin, which has saved many times more lives than the atomic bomb has destroyed, or, we hope, will ever destroy. Here, again, the normal development of fifty years was condensed into two by turning on an adequate effort. Further problems concern the structure of proteins, with its relation to agriculture, food and disease; the problem of the control of genetics, with the production of new and useful species; and the great physiological-psychological problem of the relation of body and mind.

As long as people were content with the pre-uranic scientific progress, that is, as long as people were content with what they knew, a few imaginative scientists who saw the possibilities of the serious and adequate utilisation of science, could get no hearing, but now that everybody has seen what the pace can be, they are not going to be content any longer with leaving the realisation of scientific books to their grandchildren when they could enjoy them in their own lives. The new era of the atom will also be the era in which the pursuit and application of science will become a major instead of an exceptional human occupation. Put concretely, before the war, between one-tenth and one-third of one per cent. of the national income of modern industrial States was devoted to scientific research. The war has raised this figure to over one per cent., but a rational appreciation of the newly revealed possibilities of science cannot be content with such a limit. The figure must rise year by year until it reaches stability at some value that we cannot now assess, but may within our own lifetime reach as much as twenty per cent. This implies the recasting of the educational system.

The mere increase of scientific activity, however, is not enough; it must be co-ordinated and directed to really worthy tasks. The outer tasks of science—"what needs to be done"—are set by the conditions of society. Sometimes perverse conditions, such as war, require superior methods of destruction, but normally the aim of science should be to enable individual men to realise their inherent possibilities, whether expressed in art, in science or in simple human relations. The basic requirements for food, shelter and work must first be met for the present population of the world and for its future increase. How such general directives can be translated into scientific research is a task for the scientists themselves. It needs to be organised—and organised on a world-wide basis. Science cannot be done in holes and corners. Only a combination of the scientists of all the countries of the world, freely interchanging their ideas and persons, can provide sufficient mutual stimulation to ensure a full growth of science.

Even now we can only see a very small fraction of the possible applications of atomic energy. The maintenance of secrecy on the principles and processes involved, and the limitation of their application to the use of particular nations, would be doubly disastrous, partly in slowing down the rate of useful progress, but, far more seriously, in withholding the utilisation of atomic energy on account of mutual suspicion. Science needs the widest range of free discussion to develop fruitfully. It is clear, in fact, that publication and control are indissolubly linked. If we have control without publication, we shall have permanent suspicion and resultant stifling of scientific initiative. Such a policy will actually tie up the active sources of energy which will be kept for war purposes instead of being used as fast as they are made. Leading scientists in the world have already recognised this. Sir James Chadwick has said:

> The fundamental principles involved in the atom bomb are so widely known that it is only a matter of time before every country, even without learning the British and United States secrets, develops a similar bomb. I do not think there is any safety in every country having it, but some effort should be made to control its use.

The responsibility is heavy. It must be widely borne. The democratic countries have finished their first task of liberating all countries from domination by reactionary forces. They must see to it that they do not again pass under a domination of fear created by the very weapons that gave them mastery. They will need all their intelligence and political wisdom from now on to conquer themselves.

J. D. BERNAL

A LONDON DIARY

This is certainly the best educated House of Commons there has ever been. I am not referring merely to the large number of young Labour M.P.s with Honours degrees in Economics. I am thinking of the contrast between the present Labour benches and the usual Conservative House with row upon row of men who are there because they have belonged to a certain tradition, inherited certain property or made their way through business. Many of the present Labour members have a positive political education in modern social problems. A substantial majority of them are members of the Fabian Society which at last, after sixty years of steady work, sees the realisation of the Webbian dream of a Socialist Parliament. Equally significant facts are the large number of teachers, and the arrival in Parliament of sixty members who, either as students or teachers, have graduated through the W.E.A. Ellen Wilkinson, always an enthusiast about educational reform, will have plenty of informed supporters. Though the average age of the Cabinet is over 60, Mr. Attlee's government as a whole is youthful, and I notice many excellent choices of younger men among the Under-secretaries and Parliamentary Private Secretaries. One of Mr. Attlee's main internal problems will be to make the best use of the talent and enthusiasm at his disposal.

* * *

In 1931, part of Labour's tragedy was that only the small circle around the Cabinet understood the financial problem that faced it. There developed between the official class in the Labour Party and the rank and file of its supporters, both in Parliament and outside it, the sharpest cleavage. I make three recommendations. The first, which I believe is to be carried out, is that full use be made of the talents of Members by setting up four Grand Committees "upstairs," where Bills can be dealt with in detail without the time of the whole House being wasted. This should enable a far larger body of legislation to be properly discussed and passed. The second suggestion is that committees of Members interested in particular subjects, preferably with outside experts co-opted, should meet regularly with the Minister in charge. The third is that Ministers should either by speech or broadcast consistently inform their supporters and the country as a whole of their problems, the choices before them and the solutions they propose to adopt. The electorate which put the Labour Party into power did not think of it as merely an alternative government of the old kind. It put Labour into office to do certain jobs, and its firm and continued support will only be assured if Ministers take the country into their confidence.

* * *

Every newspaper office has a huge bundle of letters on the significance and morality of atomic bombing. As I look through those addressed to the editor of this journal this week, I see that a large number of people are just sick and horrified; that some pacifists have not yet realised that neutrality has little meaning if a bomb dropped in Brussels will shatter London; that many soldiers and the mothers of soldiers (their letters lie in front of me) who had tried to believe that the Allies only bombed military targets, are appalled by the hypocrisy of our denunciations of the Germans for their indiscriminate bombing. (It is not so long since Roosevelt himself sternly questioned both combatants on this subject!) There are also sensible, if rather generalised, letters about the necessity of an international World Order. I should judge that this mood of fear and protest will last for some months, and that on its tide statesmen, able to see beyond the irrelevancies of national politics, could create a world order. If they miss the tide, cynicism and apathy will follow and the daily troubles that arise from the effort to return to normalcy in a world that cannot be normal, will once again submerge our thoughts and sap our wills. The time for Mr. Attlee and Mr. Truman to act is now.

* * *

Irony could scarcely go further than the coincidence between the obliteration of Japanese towns and the decision of the War Crimes Commission that the wanton destruction of towns and civilian populations is a war crime. The Germans after all could always claim military necessity and the saving of the lives of soldiers just as we do. Some of my correspondents want to know whether the Allied leaders are to be in the dock with Göring and Frank. In fact, the War Crimes Report is a most sensible document and its categories of crime are the right ones. I am particularly glad that the list includes the crime of deliberately planning war, which, I believe, can be proved against the leading Nazis. It is a great step, because it recognises that all war now is civil war, and that there can be no sovereign acts above the law of nations. Mr. Jackson, who has been mainly responsible on the American side for negotiating agreement on war crimes, has done a magnificent job, which is full of good augury for the future. He has shown that one man, unimpeded by the Foreign Office or State Department, can by patience, goodwill and determination break through Soviet suspicion. His job was to find a solution for the conflict between Western and Russian ideas of judicial administration. Russians have genuinely believed that the right judicial method is by way of private examination followed by public confession and denunciation. They have been persuaded that this method would not convince the western world, which believes that all the stages of justice must be public. As a result, one of the likely causes of friction between Russia and the West should have disappeared, and the trials will be a joint affair carried out by genuinely international courts in accordance with agreed legal principles.

* * *

It is amusing—but also very disturbing—to compare the statements in which Field-Marshal Montgomery and General Eisenhower explained the meaning of Potsdam to the Germans. Monty seems to be convinced that paternal dictatorship is the proper government for Germans. His statement is an exercise in the use of the first person singular, and I am told that an instruction has been issued to the effect that all important announcements to the Germans must in future be drafted in this form. What nonsense this makes of the Potsdam statement that we are trying to train the Germans in democracy! The truth is that Monty, a fine general with a lot of personal magnetism, is not the man for the job of political education in Germany. General Eisenhower's statement, though its contents are exactly the same, could not be more different in tone—personal without any exhibition of personality—in fact, the work of a soldier who is also a statesman. By the way, the "Overlord" film, *The True Glory*, which everybody is welcoming as a real achievement of Anglo-American co-operation, would have been separate British and American films if it had not been for General Ike's personal intervention. I gather that when the inevitable storm blew up he called the rival film-makers together and told them gently there would either be one Anglo-American film or no film at all. After that there was no trouble.

* * *

I am not sure that even now most people really understand just what has happened as the result of our intervention in Greece. To me it was summarised with extraordinary vividness by the article in last Sunday's *Reynolds's* by Raymond Jenkins, its admirable correspondent in Greece. He described two visits. The first was to an extremely comfortable apartment where a number of Greek Quislings, including Rallis himself, were living under guard, but with visitors, food sent in, newspapers and generally all the privileges usually allowed to important prisoners. (These were among the very few Quislings imprisoned; most of them are free, and many of them hunting down members of the Resistance.) Jenkins's second visit was to a prison where he delivered a message through bars to a Greek resister who spent his days with thirty other patriots crowded into a single small cell, in the stifling heat of a Greek August, in conditions which I should describe as incredible were they not common to most Balkan prisons. Most of these men seem not to be charged with any crime; they are there because they belonged to E.A.M. Those who are charged are accused of the crime of killing Greek Quislings, which is what they were daily told to do by the B.B.C.

* * *

I am glad that Dunmow Council has won its appeal against the proposal to set up an engineering works near Takley on the Dunmow-Bishop's Stortford Road. The Ministry of Town and Country Planning have very properly decided that it would be "contrary to the principles of good planning" to allow a factory to go up on land scheduled for agriculture. But let us be quite clear (as this journal insisted when it supported the appeal in early June) that if proposals to stop spasmodic and uncontrolled development are stopped, as they should be, then there is a vital obligation to get on with the job of ordered development. Town and Country Planning is a positive, not a negative, conception. Has a decision yet been made about the Abercrombie scheme for Greater London? If it is accepted, then Harlow ten miles away is to become a new satellite town. It is a charming little place which can be turned into a slum by spasmodic building but which may become the centre of a finely planned area in which town and country are well balanced and in which community life is still possible.

* * *

They have been draining one of the artificial lakes (emergency tanks) in a bombed site near this office. Spectators were interested in what would be found at the bottom. Apart from a lot of green stuff and sludge, a trilby, and various pieces of old iron including the lid of a dustbin, there were two sizeable roach. Everyone was asking how they got there. At last a common-sense voice said that somebody must have put them there. But why? Further discussion, and then the common-sense voice again, "So that people would ask how they got there!"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to M. M. Newland.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

In the Manchester Hippodrome show this week Peggy Stone, in full spot-light against a black velvet backcloth, gives a vocal setting of the Lord's Prayer. And it is one of the most warmly applauded incidents in a show which consists largely of dance scenes to justify its title, "Pin-up Girl Parade."—*Manchester Guardian.*

A cook is a male or female worker of 21 years of age or over wholly or mainly engaged in the preparing and cooking of food requiring the mixing of two or more ingredients with, or without, assistance. —*Industrial and Staff Canteen Undertakings Wages Board. Wages Regulation: Proposals. Para.* 9.

As a tribute to our beloved leader, Mr. Churchill, would it not be fitting to name the atomic bomb "The Churchill"?—Letter in *Western Morning News.*

NEXT STEPS IN HOUSING POLICY

WHY is it that, ever since a beginning was made with the preparations for post-war housing, the record has been one of muddle and mistake, succeeding one another in an apparently endless series? Partly because too many cooks have been spoiling the broth; housing has been no one's responsibility, but a continuous battle-ground for the Departments. This, however, is only part of the truth; for there have been at least two other factors making for repeated muddle. There has been a section of opinion, very close to the heart of the wartime Government, that has fought tenaciously against any commitment to a large-scale, long-term housing programme. According to the adherents of this school the housing shortage is essentially temporary, and will cure itself if we will but wait—patient, and houseless—for the falling trend of population to produce its effects. On this ground they have fought fiercely behind the scenes (and also in the columns of the *Economist*) against any big expansion of the strength of the building industry, arguing that expansion now will involve drastic scaling-down in a few years' time. The main reason for the fierceness of this anti-housing party is its fear that, if a large housing programme is endorsed, there will not be enough capital left to finance other desirable forms of investment. Holding by *laissez-faire* doctrines, this school opines that the impossibility of building small houses without subsidy to let at economic rents shows that consumers prefer other things to house-room, and that accordingly houses ought not to be built at all except for those who are prepared to pay the whole, or nearly the whole economic price.

This view is based on the trend of total population. It takes quite inadequate account of the fact that the main fall is in the *size* of families, and not in their *number*; and it also disregards the extreme age of many of the existing dwellings and the need to get rid of them as soon as we can. A disastrous effect of it was that the Cabinet scaled down the plans for an expansion of the building labour price originally drawn up by the Central Council of Works and Buildings, so that they emerged in the White Paper on *Training for the Building Industry* a mere shadow of themselves. Moreover, this school is apt to join hands in opposing any big housing programme with a second school, composed of those who are determined to keep municipal housing down to a minimum, in order to leave the widest possible sphere for private enterprise, not only in the actual erection of houses, but also—and primarily—in financing their erection. To this second school belong the speculative builders and housing companies, and also the leaders, or most of the leaders, of the Building Society movement, with its £700 millions of capital in search of profitable outlets as existing advances are paid off, and its potentiality of again becoming the largest single agency for the investment of the savings of the lower-middle and a section of the upper-middle class. This school is against any big public housing programme financed with the aid of cheap public credit; and it realises clearly that only by means of cheap credit, which it is not ready to provide, can a really big programme of house-building for ordinary tenants be financed.

The reason for all the shifts and turns of the last two or three years is, fundamentally, that the wartime Government would do nothing against the advocates of private enterprise, and could do nothing big unless it were prepared to fight them. Therefore its members were very ready to believe the economists who told them that the need for houses was grossly exaggerated, and that, if only they could tide over the immediate post-war years, the problems would melt away.

Why, then, it may be asked, did not the wartime Government, if it was so minded, go all out for a big programme of temporary house-building, designed to meet the immediate emergency without either increasing the size of the building industry nearly as much as would be needed for a big programme of permanent building, or treading on the tender toes of private enterprise, which would have been left with a clear run as soon as the emergency was over? The answer is that this is precisely what Lord Portal did try to do when he was Minister of Works; but it failed to come off. The Portal house, in its original form, met with so much disapproval that it had to be withdrawn; and when new designs had been made, those which seemed likely to be acceptable on the score of amenity were much too costly to be erected except in relatively small numbers. In addition, it was felt to be necessary, in order to placate as many business interests as possible, to share out the orders for temporary houses among a number of firms; and this meant that no firm got a big enough order to induce it to undertake the high capital costs of equipping itself for real mass pre-fabrication. Nor could any assurance be given of repeat orders to dispel the doubts of the firms: with the result that many of the "pre-fabricated" houses, instead of being cheaply mass-produced, are in fact being largely hand-made, and are thus both abnormally costly and—what matters even more—most uneconomical of man-power. Pre-fabrication of either temporary or permanent dwellings will work only if it is organised upon a really large scale, in factories as thoroughly equipped for it as the war factories were for the mass-production of planes. Private enterprise, without more effective promises than it has received, will not undertake this equipment. Only the Government could have done it, by making plans well ahead to turn over a number of the big war factories and by equipping these factories to mass-produce a few well-thought-out designs.

The division of responsibility between the Ministries of Health and Works aggravated these absurdities, but were not their cause; and no mere creation of a new Ministry of Housing—desirable though such a development would be—will right matters easily or quickly. The first need is for clear, unequivocal Cabinet decisions on certain vital issues of policy—above all, on the question whether the credit of the State is to be fully used to provide cheap money for house-building, no matter what powerful vested interests the supply of cheap money may offend. If a house costs £750 to build, every one per cent. of interest payable on the capital means a shilling on the weekly rent, apart from rates. That is a sufficient reason for raising the capital for house-building on the lowest possible interest terms. But if the credit is to be State credit, must not the houses be State- or municipally-owned? That is the nightmare of the friends of private enterprise, who would much sooner see no houses at all than a further "encroachment of Socialism in the people's homes."

Let us assume that the new Government is prepared manfully to tackle this problem. What can it do, now, to make the best of a thoroughly bad and dangerous situation? First, it can speed up and expand the provision which is being made for the training of additional building workers—in effect, by returning to the full plan prepared by the Council of Works and Buildings at the Ministry of Works nearly three years ago. Secondly, it can create a mobile National Building Corporation, staffed largely with the newly trained labour, to go to the help of areas in which conditions are particularly bad. Thirdly, it can at once take over a number of big arms factories and equip them at top speed for real mass-production, in some cases of finished houses, and in others of standard parts, such as complete plumbing sets ready for installation. Fourthly, it can speed up the repair of badly damaged houses, by simplifying and then strictly enforcing the regulations, so as to avoid the absurdly wide differences in output which at present occur and also the unnecessary waits for material, where licences have to be applied for successively in several different quarters.

Even if all these things are done, housing will continue for some time to present an appearance of muddle and inefficiency. No power on earth can undo, by a few decisions, the consequences of the years of tinkering by successive Ministers of Health, Ministers of Works, and Cabinet Committees to which these problems have been repeatedly referred. But to understand what is amiss is at least the beginning of amendment; and what the new Labour Government must understand from the outset is that it is beset by forces that do not want the houses to be built, except on their own anti-social terms—or even at all. A few timely withdrawals from the Cabinet's team of advisers, drastic changes in the higher personnel of the Departments concerned, concentration of responsibility in a single Department—these are necessary for a start. But the really important thing is to decide that houses must be built cheaply, and that only public credit and public organisation of supply can do the job.

G.P.M.—A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

IT is difficult to-day for us to visualise the old times before we had G.P.M. I suppose of all human inventions it has made most difference to our lives. It really has eliminated war, worry, famine, financial crises and—in fact—it has done all it is advertised to do. The history of its success is worth recalling to-day, when we all take it for granted.

The original idea, as every age-group knows, was simply to cut out some of the complications of domestic shopping. In the year 1956 an advertisement appeared in the papers which must certainly have astonished our great-grandmothers. It announced that a General Purposes Material was now on sale at 5s. per tin. G.P.M. could be used as soap or as a shoe polish. Diluted, it made an excellent distemper and an equally effective substitute for milk. It was also the best disinfectant toothpaste and made delicious "sandwiches."* The sole manufacturers were General Purposes Products, Ltd.

At first, strange as it now seems, the idea was received with scepticism. There were the usual music-hall jokes, but what was more serious was the attack made on G.P.M. by certain newspapers which carried considerable advertisements for rival commodities. It was alleged that G.P.M. was deficient in all the necessary vitamins, and that it gave a poor lather as soap. It was even attacked as a shoe polish, which showed a ridiculous prejudice, because its value in this sphere could never have been seriously doubted, even at a time when the taste was admitted to be a little unpleasant.

However, General Purposes Products was fortunately backed by some of the best brains and the biggest financiers in the country. Synthetic vitamins were added to answer the criticisms made on that score, and the lather potential was also greatly improved. The opposition press was naturally bought up, and within a few months every newspaper and journal carried long, informative articles on the uses of G.P.M., in addition to full-page advertisements. Most of the unemployed, who at that time numbered nearly 3,000,000, were soon engaged on a commission basis to demonstrate the uses of the new product. They gave free shoe-shines to passers-by in the street and feasted on G.P.M. at large banquets, where the King and Queen were often welcome visitors and declared that they had never tasted anything nicer. Children were given free tins to take home, and housewives were invited to bring their soiled linen to free G.P.M. laundries. A well-known orphanage accepted gladly

* It was not until nearly twenty years later that bread became obsolete, and G.P.M., eaten with a spoon, replaced all other foods. A "sandwich" was made of two slabs of bread, with G.P.M. between them, and the making of these curious objects must have wasted many man-hours quite needlessly

a year's free supply of G.P.M. milk-substitute.

Within a few years the idea had become very popular, and the old, untidy row of miscellaneous packages and tins disappeared from the kitchenette, replaced by a neat pile of G.P.M. containers. By the tireless efforts of the firm's scientists new uses were added and it was soon possible to advertise G.P.M. for mending rubber tyres and as a substitute for putty. The flavour was also greatly improved, and a noxious vapour eliminated. The firm opened its own distribution centres, and by cutting out the middle-man, reduced the price well below any of the equivalent commodities with which G.P.M. still had to compete. By 1966, ten years after the firm was founded, soap, distemper, shoe polish, tooth-paste, "food" of all other kinds and most of the competitive lines had almost disappeared from the market within the United Kingdom.

The value of the new product was soon realised, however, abroad as well as at home. Huge and ever-growing quantities were exported, and Britain rapidly became once more the biggest creditor nation in the world. Attempts in Germany and Russia to produce something similar failed ignominiously.† The principle raw material used in the manufacture of G.P.M. is coal, and it has now been proved beyond doubt that only British coal gives a satisfactory result. The German substitute was too hard and highly inflammable, while the Russian product was found to be the cause of a new and extremely contagious skin disease. In America, however, a measure of success was obtained, and G.P. Products immediately offered a merger, which was accepted in 1970.

Shortly afterwards, the Fifteenth Financial Conference met at Weeping Willows to consider the problem, already urgent, of an international currency. There were many proposals and counter-proposals, and the Conference was at a complete dead-lock when the Chairman of Anglo-American General Purposes Products made the suggestion—highly original, as it must have seemed at the time—that G.P.M. should replace the Gold Standard and be, in fact, not only the international monetary standard, but the actual currency. It was already so universally used that little needed to be done to achieve this result. Packed in handy little tins, it made an excellent medium of exchange.

From that moment, of course, war became unthinkable. Every nation was bound by indissoluble bonds to Anglo-American G.P. Products, because the very currency it used was edible, usable and perishable. It was the beginning of the benevolent despotism under which we live to-day, for if any country should quarrel with G.P. Products Ltd., its whole economic structure would collapse within a few weeks. Indeed, within the past few years, we have seen an end of even the last border feuds on the Indian frontier, where the tribesmen now import large quantities of G.P.M. and have become entirely dependent on its regular supply to continue their existence.

Even to-day, however, the uses of G.P.M. have not been exhausted, and its quality is still being improved. Among the new uses planned by the Directors it is now an open secret that one is to be the embalming of corpses. It is also hoped to put on the market large containers of an improved material which can be used to make plastic furniture. But quite the most interesting possibility lies in the discovery that, under normal pressure at blood heat, it reverts to coal. If this possibility can be exploited on a commercial scale, G.P.M. will solve almost every problem in life, except why we bother to live. It is hoped, however, to adapt it to contraceptive purposes.

REGINALD REYNOLDS

† The *Koreans* also attempted to manufacture a substitute from soya beans, treated with vitriol, but it proved unstable, and the toxic percentage exceeded the 10 per cent. maximum agreed to by the International Convention of 1964 (Reg. 176, para D5 on Poison Percentages).

COMMOTION

I WENT into a barber's shop for a haircut. I sat still and had my hair cut and the barber talked. He talked about everything and then suddenly he said, "The truth can be a terrible thing."

"Yes," I agreed, looking back at my shorn head in the mirror, "the truth can be a terrible thing."

"And very awkward," the barber said.

"Very awkward," I agreed again.

And then I left the shop and went back to my taxi and a curious thing happened. In fact, I never realised the implication of the barber's words, until my next fare, a girl with obvious physical charm, climbed out of my cab and began fumbling for her change.

She was young, with a scanty dress, and a curiously shaped hat. To a London cabman, who sees so much of people and so little of life, the young lady looked like any of the elegant young things who wander aimlessly down Bond Street, asserting their charm by the mere fact of their presence.

Whether her mode of dress was correct according to the circles in which she moved, I wouldn't know. She reminded me of my barber, who once advocated the theory that a woman dressed can look more naked than a woman undressed. Once again, I wouldn't know. Whether my fare was well dressed or over-dressed, I still don't know. All I do know, was that I was on my cab, and the day was cold, my hands were numb, and my petrol almost gone.

"How do you like my hat?" my fare asked, indicating a little piece of cloth overshadowed by a large bow.

"I think it's awful," I said.

"You think it's what?" she shrilled in a voice that sounded strange beside the elegance of her appearance.

"I think it's awful," I repeated truthfully.

"You think it's awful?" she echoed in an incredulous tone.

"Yes madam," I said again, "I think it's awful."

Again her mouth opened, but this time the words never came. A sudden gust of wind snatched the thing from her head and threw it swiftly between two lanes of passing traffic.

"It's gone now," I said. At once her expression changed to one of complete horror. "Yes," she said, "it's gone," in a whisper so faint that I heard her speak only by watching the movements of her lips. Then she began to cry. She cried with a silent wrath.

Matters then worsened considerably. Beside me stood a tall policeman with a thoughtful expression. He looked like a man who had succeeded in the task of finding something to do, and was at all costs determined to do it well. First he jerked a thumb toward my fare.

"Anything wrong?" he asked.

"No—nothing wrong," I replied.

"There must be something wrong," he said.

"Why must there be something wrong?" I challenged.

The policeman jerked his thumb again. "She's crying," he said.

"Yes—I know she's crying," I replied.

"And you say there's no trouble?" he asked.

"No—no trouble," I said.

"And she's crying," he asked again.

"Yes," I nodded, "she's crying."

"People don't cry for nothing," he went on.

"No—people don't cry for nothing," I agreed.

"Then why is she crying?" he asked.

"You ask her," I said.

Here the policeman paused. The narrow sidewalk was fast filling up with an inquisitive crowd. They pressed against my fare and crowded round my cab. They saw trouble, and they saw me and they all frowned.

"She's crying," a very stout lady remarked to her friend, who indicated my presence by jabbing her umbrella towards my cab. The friend, a tall angular female with a black band round her neck, nodded.

"Do you know why she's crying?" the stout lady shouted at the policeman, who stood there with an undecided look of bleak dismay.

"No, I don't know why she's crying," the policeman said.

"She can't be crying for nothing," the stout lady remarked.

"No—she can't be crying for nothing," the policeman agreed.

"Then why is she crying?" the stout lady said.

"I don't know," the policeman replied.

Then the stout lady turned to me. "Young man," she shouted in a loud voice, "do you know why she's crying?"

By now I was sick of the whole business. I was sick of the girl crying, the policeman frowning, the stout lady shouting and the whole world gaping.

"You ask her," I yelled at her, "go on," I said, "you ask her." The stout lady did. She turned towards the young woman with a sympathetic aggressiveness. "Young woman," she said loudly, "for heaven's sake, please. . ." She never said more than that. She couldn't. A little boy began shouting at the top of his voice.

"I've got it, I've got it," he yelled, holding up a muddy piece of torn cloth.

It was the policeman who spoke next. His frown deepened into a contemplative stare as he gazed suspiciously at the torn object.

"What have you got there?" he asked.

"It's a hat," I remarked.

"A hat?" the policeman echoed.

"Yes," I said, "a hat."

"Whose hat?" he asked.

"It's hers," I said indicating my fare, "it blew off her head."

"Blew off her head?" the policeman asked in blank astonishment.

"Yes," I said, "now you know why she's crying."

And now it was the stout lady's turn. "Young woman," she said, "is that why you are crying?" and the young lady turned, and in the hearing of the policeman, the stout lady, the lady with the black band round her neck and the whole world, she said in a sad and simple voice, "No—that isn't why I'm crying."

Now here I must explain one thing. I must explain that I thought I knew why the young lady was crying. I thought she was crying because her hat flew off her head, and because it fell in between two lanes of passing traffic, and got lost and full of mud. But that wasn't the reason at all. She wasn't crying because the hat flew off her head and got lost. She was crying because . . . "The taximan said my hat was awful," she sobbed—and at that I looked at my young fare, and at all the world and at the stout lady in front and I laughed—a loud uncontrollable laugh.

"What's he laughing at?" my fare asked in a surprised tone.

"I don't know what he's laughing at," the policeman replied.

"He must be laughing at something," the stout lady remarked.

"People don't laugh at nothing," added the tall angular woman with the black band round her neck.

"No—people don't laugh at nothing," the policeman agreed. They don't. I know they don't. And I went on laughing.

On the next day I went back to my barber for a shave. I sat still and the barber talked. We spoke about everything and then suddenly I said, "The truth can be a terrible thing."

"Yes," agreed the barber, looking at himself in the mirror. "The truth can be a terrible thing."

"And very awkward," I said.

"Very awkward," the barber agreed.

"And embarrassing," I said.

"And embarrassing," he replied.

MAURIE LEVINSON

PAS PERDUS

Do angels ever come this way,
Or does this hard day's journey lead where angels are,
These footsteps in the waste of time, are they the stair
That the saints climb?

Or, lost in God's forgetfulness, are we astray
In the unreal, with paper roses, ghosts,
And words whose sense is buried in the past,
And our identity a dream?

But dreams are also true
With the pathos of the inexpressible, terrible,
Denied and feared, the unloved and sorrowful,
Unbearable and extreme.

Dreamer, our Father, we are your children too,
Open your worlds within worlds,
Nature, and the eternal present of your days
To us, earth's disinherited generation.

KATHLEEN RAINE

RADIO NOTES

Cinderella. We know that Radio is under the thumb of his wife, Listener Research; that this remorseless lady and her daughters by a former husband, Variety and Suburban Comedy, have got it in for Radio's natural daughter, Chamber Music; but I cannot help thinking that the story of Cinderella belongs to the era when domestic servants were five a penny and that to treat any form of art with the last harshness is as unsuitable and as unlucky nowadays as scolding the cook. Under the new dispensation Cinderella is to have only one regular outing per week—on Fridays, when everybody else is in bed. How can she help but pine? In fairness to a form of music in which the greatest composers have cast some of their finest and most intense visions of beauty, it would surely have been feasible to allot it two forty-minute periods in the middle of the afternoon each week. This is in any case a minority moment in the day, a time when the old the ill, the convalescent and a few whom luck or intransigence has enabled to take their rest when the busy are busiest, look to the radio for a quiet expansion of their frame of mind. For these Chamber Music is, or could be, the ideal fulfilment: as intimate as lyric poetry or a talk on the ways of guinea-pigs, Chamber Music is a gentle discipline for the mind and the emotions; there is never about it that excess which afflicts orchestral music and destroys the listener's ease.

I believe that one of the reasons why moderately musical people fail to see the point of this form of art is that no serious attempt is made to show its continuity and development, either in the imagination of a single composer or in the history of music as a whole. Symphonies are constantly treated in this way, string quartets never, or only sporadically. A musical schedule that would show, without compulsion or display of pedantry, how a composer like Haydn or Beethoven evolved his chamber music parallel to his symphonic style, would open many ears. Such demonstrations are interesting; and to interest is to pave the way for enjoyment.

The Notebooks on the Barrow. This quiet, well written and agreeably acted programme on the discovery of Traherne's *Centuries of Meditation*, was a distinguished example of the kind of literary feature which informs while entertaining. The authoress, Miss V. Sackville-West, has still something to learn about radio-dramatic technique. For one thing, her dialogue needed loosening: an experienced cast tied itself into knots in places. For another, I felt that the end of the script left us in the air, so to speak. The scene between Traherne and Susanna Hopton was essentially an inset, one end of which was missing. We should, for the sake of balance, have been taken back, if only for half a page, to Brooke and Dobell. But the quality of this programme, and of its production, was high; it possessed, and communicated, the excitement of poetic discovery and a rare sense of beauty.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*August 19th.* "Miss Duveen" (Play after Walter de la Mare, 3.45); Science Magazine (7.0); Bax and Poulenc (10.38); Abraham Cowley (Verse, 11.3).

August 20th. Book Talk (Desmond MacCarthy, 8.45); *Radar* (9.30).

August 21st. Walton Violin Concerto (Grumiaux, 7.22); Malcuzynski (Piano recital, 10.25).

August 22nd. Beethoven Violin Sonata in G (1.15); "War Correspondent" (10.0).

August 24th. Beethoven Triple Concerto (7.7); "Inland Voyage" (6.30).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

MUSIC: AT THE PROMS

There is one, and only one, consolation for the loss of Queen's Hall: it could never have housed a Proms audience of the dimensions now attained. In certain parts of the Albert Hall the echo is as maddening as ever, even when the crowd is big. One presumes that every possible means of destroying this demon have already been tried; but may it not be that the cove supporting the glass dome throws the sound back to the further seats of the amphitheatre, where the echo is in fact at its worst? If this were so, an extension of the awning might improve matters.

Tuesdays seem to offer especially interesting programmes, both in the way of virtuosi comparatively new to this country, such as Malcuzynski and Arthur Grumiaux, and for works that seldom get a hearing. On August 7th, for instance, the Schubert-Liszt programme was wholly delightful. The great *Wanderer-Fantasie* is one of the very few clear cases for transcription, and Liszt's score is not only beautifully in style but full of interesting and original inventions of sonority. I thought Louis Kentner's execution of the solo part quite masterly in its limpidity of tone, its command of rubato and its shaping of the melodic line. The symphonic poem, *Hunnenschlacht*, owed its performance, I imagine, largely to Mr. Lambert's enthusiasm. It proved well worth reviving. The picture which inspired it is by Kaulbach; but, watching the orchestra play the piece, I was irresistibly reminded of those illustrations to *Paradise Lost* by John ("Mad") Martin, in which a numberless host of angels (or devils—it matters little which, from the pictorial point of view) flicker like torches in the vast gloom of a building which resembles nothing so much as the Albert Hall itself. The violin bows flickered, the organ fluted or thundered, the percussion player was constantly winged by uplifted cymbals: I can recall no other occasion on which an orchestra *physically* evoked the picture intended by the music it was playing. Like all Liszt's tone poems *Hunnenschlacht* is commendably succinct, and although it has moments of dullness (Liszt is always apt to work up his climaxes by mechanical methods) and a sanctimonious finale, the imaginative scoring, the flashes of inventive, and purely musical, genius, render this piece infinitely more agreeable to listen to than, for instance, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, of which it is obviously a forbear.

This concert gave one an opportunity of realising exactly how fine a conductor Mr. Lambert has become. His verve, his sure sense of style, the sharpness and energy of his beat, infused new life into an orchestra inevitably jaded by six years of over-work. It is to be hoped that he will become permanently, and still more importantly, associated with the Proms.

August 14th. Malcuzynski in Chopin's and Liszt's second concertos. This remarkable young pianist arrived here not long ago encumbered by a blurb which was bound to prejudice any critic in his disfavour. But if he cannot as yet be truly described as "Paderewski's successor," he has, as a Chopin player at any rate, very great qualities. He possesses a beautiful touch and a really poetic gift of phrasing in *cantabile*; his execution of the *melismata* gives them the value and quality of the flourishes and paraphs characteristic of the handwriting of Chopin's day; and his sense of rubato has the sureness which Slavs alone seem able to command. Of his purely technical ability I feel less certain: it is disconcerting to know beforehand that any very tricky passage is going to be taken with great deliberation, instead of in the player's stride. To slow down portentously at such moments is disingenuous, and it draws the piece out of shape.

LIONEL CRANFIELD

Correspondence

SUDETEN GERMANS

SIR,—In view of the discussion of the position of the Sudeten Germans, you may be interested in the following observations, made on the basis of a recent tour of the areas concerned.

The Czech Government is standing firm by its plan to sort out loyal and disloyal Sudeten Germans on a political basis, though there seems to be some doubt whether active opposition to Henlein in and before 1938 is really a sufficient test of loyalty. One newspaper here (apparently with official inspiration) recently said that only those active against the Nazis *after* Munich would qualify. The question is seriously complicated by two factors. There are some important German anti-Fascists in the Sudeten area who have in the past been prepared to go all the way with the Czechs in preserving the unity of the Czechoslovak Republic but who cannot stomach the concept of assimilation that is fundamental to the Czech plan. Indeed, I would go as far as to say, after talks with such Germans, that no serious anti-Fascists will choose to remain long in the Third Republic if Germany itself offers a political career for anti-Fascists or if opportunities to emigrate elsewhere are provided. These Germans feel that their right place is with their people, but not if those people are obliged to turn their backs on their German culture. It now looks as if the Czechs will be obliged to seek the three to five hundred thousand Germans it is intended to invite to stay from among those of the nationality fringe who in the past have shown little interest whether they are considered as Czechs or Germans. There is a considerable group of workers and peasants, many of them Social Democrats, who intermarried with Czechs and who to-day are beginning to say they don't mind whether they are considered Germans or Czechoslovaks as long as they can remain Socialist.

One thing seems pretty certain. These Sudeten Germans who have the future of their people most at heart do not think that those who claim to speak for them from London or Stockholm can bring them anything but harm. The more responsible elements in Czech opinion deplore as much as anybody else the excesses that took place two or three months ago before the Government's writ extended to the border areas, but they point out that the chief reason why tension persists is the uncertainty of the present situation. A visit to the Sudeten areas left me in no doubt that this was not only encouraging some local Czech authorities to take high-handed action in the expulsion but was definitely encouraging the Germans to serious resistance, which usually takes the form of circulating forged documents or of drifting back into the Sudeten areas from Saxony. I think that public opinion here is quite prepared to accept some delay in the transfer as long as it knows the timetable.

The second complicating factor is economic, and here too the announcement of a plan would help to solve the problem. The Czechs have made up their mind that they would have to suffer serious economic hardships as the result of breaking up the German control of the Sudeten areas. They want, however, to go ahead with their national economic plan, for which an institute is in process of formation, and until they know when and how fast the Germans will leave no serious planning is possible. OBSERVER

Prague.

RECONDITIONING GERMANY

SIR,—On July 28th, *The Times* published an official report from 21st Army Group in Germany that the German police in the British Zone are to be rearmed. The reason given was that the German people is accustomed to this form of authority manifestation.

Here, in a nutshell, is the attitude of the British occupying authorities towards the German problem. The easiest way, of course, in which our will can be imposed upon the Germans is by using the old methods and institutions of the Nazis and of a Germany which is supposed to have been swept away through our victory at arms.

What is so disturbing about this news is that it shows, indirectly, that we have not understood the meaning of re-education. We have not progressed beyond the naive and limited conception of re-education as a method of altering text-books in schools and universities, and switching wireless and newspaper propaganda from pro-Nazi to anti-Nazi sentiments. Yet, in fact, these aspects of re-education are of minor importance in comparison with the urgent need for changing the underlying social pattern—the *modus vivendi*— of German life. Not only must we eliminate racial propaganda and distorted history power worship, and the concept of a "Herrenvolk" from German text-books, literature and newspapers, but we must also change the pattern of social behaviour and family life. It is from the latter that institutions arise.

This is but one instance in which we have taken a decision which is diametrically opposed to the needs of Germany, and, less immediately, to the needs of other nations. The German people must be robbed of their means to express their love of authoritarianism, their worship of status and display of power. Academic re-education cannot achieve this alone; nor can the election of democratically-minded anti-Fascists for positions of political responsibility gain this end unless the old institutions are broken from the start and new ones introduced in their place. SERVING OFFICER

ANTI-NAZIS IN CANADA

SIR,—I was interested to read your article, "Who Goes Home?" In October-November, 1943, I was interned at Camp 32, near Ottawa, at that time the only existing anti-Nazi Camp in Canada. The Commandant, Major W. H. Whidden, a kind-hearted and very capable officer, was in charge of about eighty internees, a great number of whom had been soldiers in the German army. Most of them worked and lived on farms, although they were still prisoners and wore uniforms. Some were allowed to enlist in the Polish and Czechoslovakian armies. The living conditions in the camp were very good; anyone who did not like the work on the farm was free to return to the camp.

You probably wonder why so few anti-Nazis availed themselves of the opportunity to ask for a transfer to this camp. The fact is that the spokesmen of the camps, visited by the Swiss Consul, had a tremendous influence, and it was difficult for those whose anti-Nazi opinions were discovered to live in the camps. They were treated as outcasts; no one was allowed to speak to them. I know one of them, a very quiet man, was attacked and his arm was fractured. Another was beaten up and had to stay in hospital for months.

I was a civilian internee, and during my four years behind barbed wire I was treated very well by the Canadian and English authorities. I am a semi-invalid with only 5 per cent. normal sight. One of my reading glasses was lost when sent to the camp. A new one was bought for me by the Canadian Red Cross, although it cost eighty dollars.

After my return to England a kind interpreter persuaded me to apply for my release, as I would be found work by which I could support myself. I was able to work at a factory for about ten months.

ARTHUR H. VON LOESCH

"Lavender Croft,"
Wymondley Road, Hitchin.

INDIAN PRISONS

SIR,—I doubt if your correspondent, Mr. Quinton, was ever a prisoner in an Indian jail. I never was myself; but I question his assumption that official statements on prisons are necessarily reliable. Certainly none of us would have applied that assumption to official German statements regarding Belsen.

In my *White Sahibs in India* I began the chapter on "Law and Order" with two instances of glaring discrepancies in official information. Even in Britain the difference between what is *supposed* to happen in prison and what *actually* happens is notorious—a fact illustrated abundantly by writers from Hobhouse and Brockway to Macartney and Phelan. Largely in order to test their assertions, I once refused to pay a small fine, and spent a week in an English jail, where I confirmed many of these discrepancies from observation and experience. The word of a prisoner is rarely (if ever) accepted, if denied by a prison officer. If that is so here, surely the discrepancy is likely to be much greater in India. The only protection a prisoner has—for what it is worth—lies in democratic institutions. But in India there was only the brief shadow of democracy (from 1937 to the resignation of the Congress Ministries) and the freedom of the press has frequently been suspended—*particularly as regards references to political prisoners*—at the time when vigilance was most needed.

As to the statement that "Visitors, official and non-official, have access to every prisoner," the Socialist leader, Jayaprakash Narain, was long held prisoner without any visitors being allowed and *without even any public knowledge as to where he was imprisoned*, in spite of questions in the Central Legislature. For an account of what could actually happen (quite unofficially, but with official connivance) in an Indian jail, the reader might study Lester Hutchinson's speech for his defence, recorded in *Prison Anthology* (edited by Miss Stock and myself) or read Hutchinson's *Conspiracy at Meerut*. I notice that Mr. Quinton does not deal with the admitted instances, quoted by Mr. Sen, of floggings inflicted at the "discretion" of prison officials.

It is unfortunate and confusing that a discussion of Indian prisons should have taken the form of comparisons with Belsen and Buchenwald. Conditions could be vile, and still fall far short of those attributed to Nazi concentration camps. But I almost wish now that I had kept the mass of documents on this subject which I brought from India some years ago. I destroyed them because I no longer believed in "atrocity propaganda" (so dangerously popular to-day) and because I felt the uselessness of trying even to *publish* the statements of Indian ex-prisoners (and Indian doctors who examined them on release) when I knew such evidence would be dismissed on the *ipse dixit* disclaimers of the accused officials.

20 Jubilee Place, S.W.3 REGINALD REYNOLDS

WHY NO NURSES?

SIR,—Your correspondents have drawn attention to two of the possible causes of shortage of nurses—off-duty conditions and the stultifying attitude of die-hard trained nurses. May I attempt to voice the thoughts of many young nurses of to-day—those who withstood the pre-war pressure of a sixty- to seventy-hour working week topped off by study in "free" time, and all those Victorian traditions of subjection, and who, in spite of it all, are sincerely happy in their work?

No one can truly assess the shortage of nurses to-day. Gross wastage of nursing power exists and is condoned by hospital authorities: student nurses are a cheap means of getting the hospital work done and nearly half of each day is spent in extraneous duties which could well be performed by trained hospital orderlies. Even when this is remedied, however, a shortage of many thousands of trained nurses will remain.

For enrolment on the General State-register, a student must pass examinations and complete a three or four years' training directed by the General Nursing Council. The Horder Report (1944) states

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that forty to sixty per cent. of the entrants to the profession do not complete this training: before recruiting campaigns, this loss should be investigated. Three possible causes are:

(1) That the training is either too difficult or that it is unsuccessfully presented.

(2) That some of the entrants are unable to profit from such education.

(3) That the training is unduly protracted, causing loss of interest; or that private affairs prevent so long a period of residence in a nurses' home.

Point No. 1.—Candidates enter hospital with grossly unequal standards of education. Pre-nursing courses do exist but are, illogically enough, the prerogative of the secondary school, thus widening further the gap between the two, when it is the elementary school girl who needs this most. Pre-hospital courses of simple scientific and technical subjects should be available for all. As for unsuccessful presentation of material, few hospitals can have a clear conscience upon the way in which *practical* nursing is taught. In my opinion, practical bedside training counts above all other forms of nursing education.

Point No. 2.—Matrons, in desperate need for pairs of hands, are driven to accept all who offer to *try* to nurse. Tests of occupational suitability such as used for members of the Forces could do much to reduce the loss caused by incompatibility. At the same time, every encouragement should be given to attract intelligent candidates by good working conditions, full recognition of the professional status of the qualified nurse and a salary (especially for the bedside nurse) at least comparable with that of other professions.

Point No. 3.—With relief from non-nursing duties, it should be possible to shorten the periods of training. All grades of nurses need the same basic training for bedside nursing duties. Nurses then wishing to qualify for the posts of ward sister, midwife, health visitor, sister tutor and so on would need further training, but this should be dove-tailed to prevent overlapping. Under present arrangements it is possible to spend ten to twelve years in qualifying as a sister tutor.

Lastly, where home conditions make it impossible for a student to begin or to continue her training because she cannot live in a nurses' home, it should be possible for that condition to be waived. All student nurses should be given sufficient time in which to study, so that off-duty time (which should be planned well in advance and changed only in emergency) can be largely the student's own.

SISTER TUTOR

STERILE INTERCOURSE

SIR,—Mr. Ambrose Appelbe's comments on the recent decision of the Court of Appeal defining wilful refusal to consummate marriage are in order, but I must assert with respect that the results which he deduces from that decision are erroneous and likely to mislead your readers.

The decision lays down that "consummation" for the purpose of s. 7 of the Matrimonial Causes Act, 1937, must comprise both penetration and transmission of semen. Mr. Appelbe appears to think that the same two-fold test must be applied in the definition of "adultery" in s. 2 of the Act (which sets out the grounds on which a marriage may be dissolved). This deduction is, I think, quite incorrect. It has long been held that even a partial penetration without emission can constitute adultery, and the new decision does not in any way alter the legal definition of adultery. Indulgence in sterile intercourse may most certainly amount to adultery, and an assertion of sterile intercourse can be no answer to a charge of adultery in a petition for dissolution of marriage.

This case has not, therefore, the far-reaching effect suggested by Mr. Appelbe, but I do agree with him that the possibilities of collusive petitions for nullity of marriage are thereby much increased.

L. J. J. MORGAN

GREEK INTERNMENT CAMPS

SIR,—It was interesting to contrast the statements made by the R.A.M.C. major in his letter on Greek Internment Camps with the talk by Sir Ronald Storrs on "The Middle East Revisited" in the Home Service of the B.B.C. three weeks ago. "All along this north-eastern coast (of Africa) and as far south as Eritrea," said Sir Ronald, "are camps of prisoners-of-war and of refugees: most of them yearning for home; some—Russians and Poles—begging not to be sent home. There are also internees; and the pestilent and dangerous dregs and scum of ancient and honourable nations—Stern gangsters from Palestine and no less pernicious specimens of E.A.M. and E.L.A.S. from Greece .... In one of the camps near Tobruk their filth, slovenliness and misconduct fairly revolted the platoon guarding them."

This seems to be a fitting climax to Mr. Churchill's instructions issued last year that no credit should be given to E.A.M. or E.L.A.S. for any action they might perform. If an eminent authority on Middle East affairs is able to make such appallingly unfair statements as this on the radio, and at the same time information on the present state of affairs in Greece is withheld from us, our freedom of judgment is gradually diminishing.

If we desire a true democracy the people must be fully informed about all aspects of current affairs, and there must be no attempt to stop information being published—especially in the case of Greece, where men who fought for years for the liberation of their country are now apparently being systematically extinguished.

EDUCATION SERGEANT

TOOLS FOR THE JOB

SIR,—Mr. Zilliacus rightly stresses the need for revised parliamentary procedure, without which it will, in my view, be extremely difficult to implement Labour's Five-Year Plan. The electors want speedy action and will accept no excuse for delay due to cumbersome legislative methods.

As Parliament and Local Authorities will have to co-operate more closely than ever before, Labour majorities in Local Government are essential. Backward councils can so easily hamstring progressive legislation. Members of Local Authorities should be younger. This means that facilities should be granted to Service men and women to be Local Government candidates next November. It also means some form of compensation for loss of income due to service on Local Authorities. The Nuffield Organisation, I believe, has already adopted a scheme under which employees elected to Local Authorities are given time off without loss of pay.

MARCUS LIPTON

House of Commons, S.W.1.

WAGNER

SIR,—Mr. Desmond Shawe-Taylor doubts the truth of the Paris performance of "Tannhauser" having been conducted from a first violin part, from the angle that the feat would have been impossible, not from the angle that any such feat should have been necessary or have been done at all. It is not an impossible task. Does Mr. Desmond Shawe-Taylor not know that in every big work the parts are cued-in to make entry easier and more certain after a period of rest? This applies to the recitatives as well, when the text and the notes are printed above the instrumental part.

The mere fact that the violins do not enter for 24 bars is no obstacle to the feat, therefore. On the evidence of Bulow I would be inclined to believe the story in the light of so many curious things which have happened. I would doubt strongly its truth had the opera been rehearsed in this manner, for this would be an impossibility; but no mention is made of this.

Savage Club.

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"No, no, you can feel, Sybil, though I cannot express, how much I honour your father. But he stands alone in the singleness and purity of his heart. Who surround him?"

"Those whom the People have chosen; and from a like confidence in their virtues and abilities. They are a senate supported by the sympathy of millions with only one object in view—the emancipation of their race. It is a sublime spectacle these delegates of labour advocating the sacred cause in a manner which might shame your haughty factions. What can resist a demonstration so truly national! What can withstand the supremacy of its moral power!"

So writes Disraeli of the rise of the Chartists in *Sybil or The Two Nations*. His people are speaking the language of opera; yet, after a hundred years, how exactly Disraeli has defined the English political situation. He is our only political novelist; the only one *saturated* in politics; the only one whose intellect feasts on polity. Strikes, riots, questions of social justice, elections and backstairs politics, enliven the other Victorian novelists of the period frequently; but of Mrs. Gaskell, George Eliot, Meredith, Trollope it cannot be said that politics are their blood. These writers do not convert us to this view or that; they are cautious; they do not inflame us; on the whole, they leave us with the impression that political action is a disagreeable duty, distracting us from the major interests of human nature. Children of a competitive society, heirs of the Utilitarians, they see politics as the indispensable but tedious regulator. Politics are a method, a humane technique of adjustment; and, in general, it must be said that this has been the English view throughout the 19th century and after. To Disraeli, the Jew and alien, such a theory was piecemeal and despicable.

In his early years, at least, and especially in the trilogy of novels of which *Sybil* is the second volume, Disraeli brought to political thought the electric heat of the Jewish imagination and the order of its religious traditions. He demanded the glory of a dogma, the sensation of a re-birth, the emotion of "a new era"—a phrase used for the first time at the accession of Queen Victoria. And when we pick up *Sybil* or *Coningsby*, with their captivating pictures of aristocratic life and their startling, documented pictures of the squalor of the industrial poor, we feel that here at last is a novelist who is impatient of immediate moral issues and who has gone back dramatically to the historical elements of the English situation. The medium has gone. We may now be carried away by a faith, snared by a passion. How precise is the diagnosis of the failure of his own party; they are not Conservatives but concessionaries, a party without beliefs. As we read these two books we are swept along by a swift and breathless pen. It takes us, by a kind of cinematic magic, from the gold plate and languid peers of the Derby dinner to the delectable mansions and heavenly countenances of the exalted and from them to the sunken faces of the starving. We may find ourselves converted to a new mediævalism, to those heady "Young England" politics which read like a mixture of Marx, William Morris, Hall Caine and romantic Fascism. He was wrong; wrong, that is to say, as things turned out. Young England came to nothing and the English workers followed the solemn prophecies of Sybil and not the aristocratic theory of Egremont; but whether he was right or wrong is not the point. The secret of Disraeli's superiority as a political novelist is that he introduces imagination into politics; he introduces questions of faith and vision. He looked upon the English scene with the clear intellect of the alien who, as a Jew, identified himself with both the two English nations; with the race that was to be emancipated and with the aristocracy that ruled them. The romantic, Byronic pride of Disraeli—if we are to take the figure of Sidonia in *Coningsby* as a projection of himself, several times larger than life, upon the screen—is measureless. Under the ancient gaze of the hollow eye of Asia, the Norman family is as crude as a band of tourists standing before the ruin of Ozymandias, king of kings.

Disraeli's gift is for the superb and the operatic. And if there is more than a touch of the *de luxe* and meretricious in his picture of the superb, that fits in with the political picture; politics is the world of promises. Disraeli knew God and Mammon. So many political novels have known God, the party cause, alone; and without Mammon the people fainteth. He was the romantic poet and yet the *rusé*, satiate, flattering and subtle man of the world. When we are exhausted by visions he can soothe us with scandal. No one, said Queen Victoria with delight when she read his letters—no one had ever told her *everything* before. The novels of Disraeli tell us everything. He not only plants the main spectacle, the house party of history; but he tells us the club gossip and the boudoir gossip — especially that—and speculates with malice on the dubious political career, on the unelevating scenes of political muddle and panic. He knows ambitious human nature. His eye is bright, his wit is continuous. His general surveys, notably those of the shams and disasters which overtook the regime of the Duke of Wellington, are wonderful destructive criticisms. No one describes a ball, or a house party, or a dinner as well as Disraeli, for no one so quickly and neatly gives one the foibles and background of the guests. His family histories are masterpieces of irony; he knows the private history of grandeur, the long machinations that have produced a Lord Monmouth or a Lord Marney. (In our own time we can imagine the late Lord Curzon modelling himself on Disraeli's personages.) Then all his ladies are ravishing; nevertheless, though never losing his sympathy for the female character and never ceasing to flatter, he sets it out with the coolest impartiality. "Although the best of wives and mothers she had some charity for her neighbours"—does that not "get" the good woman precisely? Or take the portraits of Lucretia Colonna and her mother in *Coningsby*. They are social generalisations like all his characters, and yet how definite they are! I find it difficult to get the hard, grasping, silent and daring daughter out of my mind. Eighteen and a monster of imperiousness already; silent because ill-educated; how she will exploit the old peer who, all his life, has been exploiting others! Disraeli knows exactly how society has created the character of Lucretia; like Sidonia, he has flattered and observed her. The Lucretia episode in *Coningsby* is rich comedy; for it entangles the egregious Mr. Rigby, Lord Monmouth's awful agent. There is nothing more amusing in this novel than the sight of Mr. Rigby being sent off to subdue the emotions of the mother who has been jilted in favour of her secretive daughter. The obnoxious Rigby is a master of tactics:

> He talked wildly of equipages, diamonds, shawls, opera boxes; and while her mind was bewildered with these dazzling objects, he, with intrepid gravity, consulted as to the exact amount she would like apportioned, independent of her general revenue, for the purpose of charity.

Having flown at him like a tigress and poured out epithets—"some of them true"—like a fish-wife, the Princess calms down, fanned by his promises, and ends by the faint, pouting complaint that Lord Monmouth "might have broken the news himself." The aristocrat is admired for doing what we would all like to do, but cannot. Who is there who would not willingly pay a Mr. Rigby to go down and break the brunt of the scenes that are being prepared for one? We cannot call Rigby a great comic character because he is too rapidly generalised in his appearances. Libellously drawn from the notorious Crocker, he is a portrait, not a character. He is a rich and perennial political type: the yes-man. We add him to our collection of cads and buffoons. The summary of his character is exact:

> The world took him at his word because he was bold, acute and voluble: with no thought but a good deal of desultory information; and though destitute of all imagination and noble sentiment, he was blessed with a vigorous and mendacious fancy, fruitful in small expedients and never happier than when devising great men's scrapes.

Coningsby is a novel of static scenes. There is one that is rightly famous. This is where Coningsby, as a youth, goes to call on Lord Monmouth, his grandfather, for the first time and proceeds from stairway to stairway, apartment to apartment in the great house, until at last he comes into the presence. The emotion is too much for the sensibility of the shy youth, who bursts into tears; and the disgusted old peer, who cannot bear displays of feeling, dismisses him at once. This is one of the human scenes which stand out so movingly against the excess of artificial ones. Where *Coningsby* is still, *Sybil* moves. We pass from the pictures of society to the pictures of working-class starvation and slavery. Disraeli investigated the conditions of the poor for himself, and his remarkable eye and ear collected a number of unforgettable sights and dialogues. There is nothing more terrifying in our literature than his picture of the slum town of locksmiths run by the toughest working men alone, a kind of frontier town without institutions. We see the knocker-up on his rounds, the starving weaver at his loom, the fever and the gloom of the rain-sodden houses, the new pubs and entertainment halls, the good factories and the bad ones. The conversation of the people is not falsified, but is indeed indigenous and racy. Disraeli drew miners, for example, very well and understood their lives. We have entered into a world already made familiar to us by the prophetic books of Blake. Blake-like cries come out of this darkness: "I wish there was no such thing as coal in the land," says the weaver's dying wife. "And then the engines would not be able to work and we should have our rights again."

Sybil is melodrama—it would make an excellent opera or film—it lacks the closely finished texture of *Coningsby*, but is looser, bolder in argument, wildly romantic in scene. The satire at the expense of the Whig families, who are driving the cottagers off their land and selling out to the railway companies, is scathing: "Sympathy is the solace of the Poor: but for the Rich there is compensation." The rioting and the attack on Mowbray Castle at the end is tremendous theatrical stuff, though—it must be remembered—Disraeli claimed that all his material about the Chartists was carefully documented. The unreality of certain characters, especially Sybil herself, is, of course, comical; but such characters are not unreal in their context. They are ideas walking and so romantic in their carriage that in the end one accepts them and their theatrical lamentations over their stolen heritage.

The *roman à thèse* is not commended as a rule by English critics; we read, as a rule, to be contented, and Disraeli's novels have caused a good deal of polite laughter. Such a world of superlatives invited ridicule. One can never be absolutely sure that Disraeli's imagination would distinguish between a great palace and a great Corner House; just as we can never be quite sure, as Lytton Strachey pointed out, that Disraeli was not himself carried away by the luxurious flatteries he poured into the ears of Queen Victoria. To-day, *Tancred*, *Lothair* and *Endymion* entice us for a chapter or two by a similar flattery of our intellect and of our love of luxury; but pretty soon we have had enough. *Sybil* and *Coningsby* are another matter. It can be said with confidence that they are the two dominant political novels of our language.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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NEW NOVELS

The Winds of Fear. By HODDING CARTER. *Gollancz.* 8s. 6d.

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We Always Come Back. By JAMES ALLEN. *W. H. Allen.* 8s. 6d.

These are the dog days of the novel, days of torpor and drought, days, for the critic, of despair.

Here, for example, is one good book about which there is almost nothing to be said, one very vivid book which is a failure for uninteresting reasons, one very pleasant and jolly book and one outrageous book. No possibility of that unifying introductory theme, or of those pleasing bridge-passages: "Mr. Raymond, on the other hand . . ." Would it be earning one's salary and space to give a blank-eyed précis of each plot, and leave it at that? Alas, not here.

I now notice that two of these novels are by Americans, and that these are the best of them and the worst. "American novels are either very good or very bad." But it's grotesquely untrue. Two of the authors have surnames for christian names. Three of the titles are four words long. Mr. Allen is published by a Mr. Allen. The average price of the books is 8.375 shillings.

The Labour Government! What will it do for the novel? What has the novel done for it?

Anglo-American relations: Carter-Fulford.
Americo-Australian relations: Allen-Raymond.
These are the dog days . . . but no!

Mr. Carter has written a very good kind of book and one for which American writers seem particularly suited. It is in the same category as Woolfert's *Tucker's People* and Hersey's *A Bell for Adano*: all three are novels which deal sympathetically and thoughtfully with contemporary social problems. In Mr. Carter's case it is the perennial problems of race savagery in the South, but here it is treated in a new and unusually objective way. There is no baulking the horrors of the situation or the vicious and degraded minds which it engenders. But the detestable conduct of the whites is put in a context which, while doing nothing whatever to secure it, does do much to explain it. We are in the atmosphere of *A Passage to India*, with the terrible difference that white Americans behave with direct physical savagery, while Anglo-Indians are more or less restrained from doing so by their own governmental tradition.

In this book by far the most convincing character is the poor white, Dodd, who is elected Mayor on the qualification of his anti-negro brutalities. One doesn't need to know the environment to recognise the shocking credibility of this dour and drunken murderer. Indeed, it is the shocking credibility of the whole story which will be its most impressive quality for English readers. What an abominable world this is; and how, in so humane and fundamentally decent a country, can it still survive?

Mr. Carter insists, and it seems reasonable, that only the Southern whites can cure their country of this disgusting evil. He is harsh to Northern intervention, and harsh even to those negroes who hope to oppose white oppression by their own action. He is a writer who gives a strong impression of humanity and intelligence, so that most ignorant readers will be ready, if reluctant, to accept his policy of long-term conversion.

These are the kind of reflections which the book engenders. It is a piece of brilliant documentation, combined with a powerful propaganda message. Mr. Carter has had no intention of attempting something new in fiction, of making a technical experiment, of making some bold breach with tradition. Why should he wish to do any such thing? Yet how pleasant it would have been for this reviewer if he had!

Mr. Fulford has shown courage in attempting to be satirical in this supremely unsatirical age. He is as savage as he should be, and his victim is well chosen. Few contemporary English types are more deplorable and hateful than the unscrupulous career politician, and in this hateful category I've no doubt that the most hateful of all is to be found among the Liberal National party. Mr. Fulford follows his victim with loving detestation from the cradle to an improbable but satisfying public disgrace. Much of the book is most amusing, though there is nothing, perhaps, quite to equal the Lancaster illustrations. But it seems to me that there are two ruinous faults. The first is the extreme heaviness of touch. In the course of a stupendously trite speech it is surely unnecessary for Mr. Fulford to insist on its triteness in a clumsy parenthesis. A satirist must assume that his readers will appreciate his satirical intention. The second fault is more serious. The great satirists have launched their attacks from the clouds, so to speak, refusing to divulge, let alone to boast of the platforms on which they were standing. It is impossible to combine the savage irresponsibility of satire with the fervent defence of an alternative to the object satirised. When Juvenal attacks the matrons of Rome for descending into the arena, he doesn't have to add that, for his part, he would leave the ring to the gladiators, as recommended by the anti-imperial party. Swift attacks the Whigs, but doesn't defend the Tories in the same breath. It destroys the satire to lay one's own platform open to an equally satirical attack.

So that, with all respect to the genuine Liberal party, I think Mr. Fulford's constant defence of it in this book is altogether out of place. Nor, incidentally, do I think that ignorance of the tribal customs of the English aristocracy is so comically unseemly as Mr. Fulford finds it.

Mr. Raymond's book is most agreeable. This story of a small Australian boy is full of delightful information: it is amusing, lively and intoxicatingly unpretentious.

Mr. Allen's book is horrible. It is the first account I have read of an American soldier's experiences in wartime England, and if this is to be the standard of their curiosity and behaviour, I hope it will be the last. Though a surprised and patronising tribute is paid to contemporary English writers, the book, apart from a long and repetitive description of a raid on Hamburg, is wholly concerned with provincial dance halls, shady hotels, necking, copulating and drinking. There is a six-page description of a crap game which is utterly unintelligible and by far the most enjoyable thing in the book.

"Tell you what," the Major said, "I'll shoot the eighty-one time."
"Take twenty," the F/O said.
The Lieutenant said, "Ten."
"Twenty," said a Captain, a new man in the game.
"Thirty open," the Major said. He hesitated.
"Ten," said Miller,
The Lieutenant changed his mind. "Ten more."
"Ten open," the Major said. "No begging."

If only it had all been like this!

Sociologically interesting is the fact that Americans in Britain have the utmost difficulty in warding off the frenzied attentions of limey girls. Sometimes, alas, they are raped. This book will do some harm, though it is too silly to do much.

PHILIP TOYNBEE

REDBRICK: OPUS II.

Redbrick and These Vital Days. By BRUCE TRUSCOT. *Faber.* 10s. 6d.

Readers of *Redbrick University* will approach Mr. Bruce Truscot's book with an assurance of finding it well worth reading. There have been too few active teachers from "Redbrick"—though there have been several Vice-Chancellors—who have set out for the public their vision of the modern University and of its place in the whole educational scheme. Perhaps the others have been too busy teaching and administering their departments; perhaps, as Mr. Truscot hints rather broadly, they have been silent because of having nothing to say. Mr. Truscot has plenty to say. A long experience of modern university teaching has not quelled his enthusiasm or made him lower his standard of what a University ought to be. It ought to be, he insists again and again, a place for the "pursuit of knowledge" and therefore primarily for research. The teaching function should come second, not because it is less important, but because it can be carried on well only if the University is pervaded by the spirit of discovery. It is Mr. Truscot's foremost thesis that research should take pride of place, not only in the scientific departments but just as much in the Arts faculties—in effect everywhere.

Obviously, in practice, research does not come first. "Oxbridge," as well as "Redbrick," is organised, and regards itself, primarily as a teaching institution, into which research activities either fit, or fail to fit. In Redbrick, outside the applied sciences, they usually fail to fit; and Mr. Truscot is caustic at his colleagues' expense in criticising the failure. It is not, he argues, that the Professors lack the time; the will is lacking. How many men, in their hard-worked earlier years, produce excellent research monographs, and thereafter, having become comparatively leisured professors, nothing at all. The fault is partly theirs, but not wholly. The truth is that, in most places, research is not expected of them, or even encouraged. Most local authority representatives regard the regional Universities, outside the natural sciences at any rate, purely as teaching establishments and do not give a button for research, which, in relation to arts subjects and especially to those which touch contemporary affairs, they are apt to mistrust. Consequently, Mr. Truscot has to ask for more freedom for the modern Universities from local authority control—a control which he regards as disproportionate to the actual financial aid given by the local authorities. He has also to ask, very pertinently, for higher pay for senior university teachers in "Redbrick," and for much more State aid in providing residential facilities as well as in improving staffing ratios and equipment.

A good deal of Mr. Truscot's new book is concerned, not directly with "Redbrick," but with the problem of the "public" and public secondary schools. He is unexpectedly kind to the Fleming Report; but he rightly insists that much more important than anything that can happen to the "public" schools is the improvement of conditions in the public secondary schools, in which the great majority of the nation's young people, including most of the clever ones and of those with a capacity for leadership, will get their higher education. Just as he wants to raise "Redbrick" to "Oxbridge" standards of staffing and equipment, so he wants to raise the public secondary schools, not to luxury, but to a good all-round standard, including, where necessary, removal to new premises outside the towns, and the installation of boarding houses for all who would benefit by them either for part or for the whole of their career at school.

On the question of training teachers, Mr. Truscot is entirely on the side of that half of the McNair Committee that wants to bring the Training Colleges into close affiliation to the Universities. He dismisses rather lightly the danger of swamping the existing Universities, and, rather surprisingly, does not discuss the project of founding new Universities with a bias, though not an exclusive bias, towards civic and social subjects and training. He is also unexpectedly damping about the idea of making the University, in a wide sense, the effective centre of the intellectual and cultural life of its region—presumably because he is afraid of too much and too different extra-mural activity sapping the foundations of research.

The book travels over so much ground that it cannot be well reviewed in a short space. If you have read *Redbrick University*, read its successor too. If not, read them both.

G. D. H. COLE

MR. ELIOT'S CLASSIC

What is a Classic? By T. S. ELIOT. *Faber.* 3s. 6d.

Mr. Eliot has somewhere said that he would not care for his poetry to be considered apart from his prose; somewhere else he has said that he himself cannot bear to re-read his own prose writings. If one finds oneself more in sympathy with the second of these remarks than with the first, it is because there are times when Mr. Eliot's verse and Mr. Eliot's prose seem respectively the Jekyll and Hyde of the same personality. In the poetry there is always a superb humanity; in the prose there is too often the Eliot whom he has himself described:

> His conversation, so nicely
> Restricted to What Precisely
> And If and Perhaps and But.

His essay on Shakespearean Criticism in the newly reprinted *Companion to Shakespeare Studies* is almost wholly given over to an enunciation of what we must be careful to avoid saying. And sometimes if an author, for some reason or other, does not greatly appeal to him, he will write of him, as he writes of Thomas Hardy, without even taking the trouble to collect a little accurate information about easily ascertainable facts.

On the other hand, he has always been an illuminating critic when he has dealt with authors who have become part of his own consciousness; one remembers his brief essays on the Elizabethan dramatists and on Dante. *What is a Classic?* stands out among Mr. Eliot's later allocutions as being a return to his way of treating a writer who has influenced him. One has the impression, however, that this essay has been thought out backwards, like a detective story. Indeed, it is rather like a detective story in its presentation. It is an essay describing the uniqueness of Virgil: this, as Mr. Eliot sees it, resides in the fact that Virgil achieved maturity of mind, manner and language, in the fact that the society of which he was the flower was itself mature, and in the fact that a great phase of language culminated in him and was exhausted by him. We can find such concurrence nowhere else, according to Mr. Eliot. He is not suggesting that Virgil is as great a poet as Homer or Shakespeare; or that a language is necessarily fortunate in producing such a poet as Virgil. He is suggesting that in the most comprehensive and exacting sense Virgil provides a classic norm which cannot be found elsewhere. Shakespeare is excluded from Mr. Eliot's definition, because of the immaturity, as Mr. Eliot thinks, of Elizabethan and Jacobean civilisation; Pope, Racine and Molière are excluded because they, like their society, miss so much out; Goethe is lacking in universality; Dante, who is perhaps runner-up to Virgil, presumably fails on the score of not exhausting the language. The essay is a remarkable piece of dialectic; but as one great poet after another is knocked out of the arena, one begins to wonder if one really wants a classic norm very much, and if a classic norm is much worth having.

Mr. Eliot has his answer to this, and it seems to me a convincing one. He sees in the existence of such a standard as Virgil, and partly because Virgil can be regarded as the centre of European culture, a guard against the encroachments of provincialism. We always need this warning, for provincialism of one kind or another is a continual danger, whether it is the kind of provincialism that narrows the dimensions of an art, or the provincialism that betrays a critic, as in recent years for example, into the overvaluing of the "Left" because it is Left, or of the French because it is French. And in Mr. Eliot himself we do get the impression of a writer free from the provincialism he so much dreads the sight of: a critic whose terms of reference include a vast tract of literature sensitively apprehended, a writer who is capable of generalisation, but who will not generalise recklessly because he knows that a tempting thought about a certain aspect of literature may so easily be a deception. Probably no other writer of our time could have marshalled so many acute observations and reminders into so small a space as Mr. Eliot does here. Sometimes the reader may feel he has to flense off a good deal of outer integument before getting to the precious spermaceti. But in the end the outer integument, of Mr. Eliot as of whales, seems also to have its value.

HENRY REED

PROFESSOR TYNDALL

The Life and Work of John Tyndall. By PROFESSOR A. S. EVE and C. H. CREASEY. *Macmillan.* 21s.

This belated biography is the sequel to a tragic accident now almost forgotten. In 1893 John Tyndall, the famous scientist, at the age of 73, was accidentally poisoned by his devoted wife, who gave him a dose out of the wrong bottle—chloral in mistake for magnesia. The heart-broken widow spent the rest of her life—and she only died in 1940—paralysed by remorse. She collected a mass of material for this biography, failed to write it herself, and effectually prevented anyone else doing so, on one ground or another. She was convinced that no one could ever do her hero justice. The present life, sifted from Mrs. Tyndall's accumulation of letters and documents, contains a full account of Tyndall's scientific achievements, and much interesting detail of the personal relations between the Victorian scientists; while a special chapter is devoted to Tyndall's early mountaineering exploits in the Alps.

Tyndall was the son of a sergeant in the R.I.C. and his Irish origin revealed itself in the versatility, eloquence and pugnacity which stamped his career. Although he did much original research on magnetism, radiation, sound, glaciers and biology, as a discoverer he was not quite in the first flight of his great contemporaries, Faraday, Darwin, Kelvin, Crookes and Lister. But as a popular expounder of science he was second to none. For thirty years his lectures packed the Royal Institution, where he would enthrall the crowds with his artificial rainbows of turpentine or by lighting his cigar in the dark from an invisible beam of infra-red rays. His lecture tour in America in 1872-3 was a *furore*; and the sale of his books alone brought him in a comfortable income. Yet with the public his zest for intellectual disputes perhaps gained him even greater fame than his writings and lectures.

In that heyday of controversy, Tyndall was always ready for the fray. His greatest friend has an entry in his diary: "He is in debate a terribly rough and unconquerable antagonist. I like this phase of Tyndall's character least; he enjoys an intellectual fence for its own sake." Apart from arguments with fellow scientists over the validity of theories or—and these were the most bitter—the priority of discoveries, Tyndall, being an outspoken agnostic, took a leading part in the battle of Science against Religion over the Darwinian theory and the literal interpretation of the Bible. It was one of these ferocious controversies incidentally that enabled Tyndall to make his most outstanding contribution to knowledge. A Dr. Bastian claimed to have discovered the existence of Spontaneous Generation. To disprove this, Tyndall tried to sterilise air; and during his experiments, he proved the organic nature of the motes that penetrated his filters. Thus the existence of airborne "germs" was substantiated for the first time; and both Lister and Pasteur developed the discovery.

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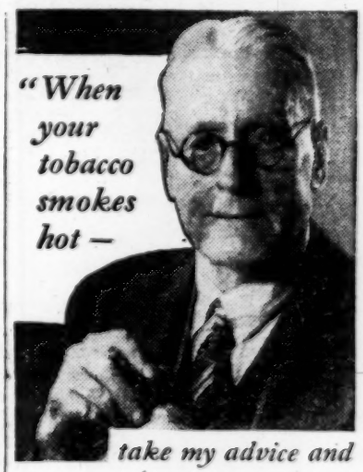

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Another of Tyndall's discoveries was Hindhead, where he and his wife built the first house. But this discovery he strangely objected to sharing. When neighbouring houses cropped up, Tyndall, in his indignation, built towering screens of larch poles and heather to shut them out from his sight.

In health Tyndall suffered from chronic dyspepsia and insomnia—the occupational diseases of Victorian scientists. This accounts for the fatal proximity of the two bottles of chloral and magnesia on the morning of December 4th, 1893. In appearance the portraits and photographs show the lean cheeks, the severe eye, the jutting nose, the long upper lip, relentless mouth and fantastic beard of the typical Victorian grandee.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

A STUDENT OF RUSSIA

The Russia I Believe In. By SAMUEL N. HARPER. *University of Chicago Press : Cambridge University Press.* 21*s.*

Professor Samuel Harper died suddenly in January, 1943, leaving his memoirs incomplete. Carefully edited, with the interposition of some relevant notes and letters, they are now published by his brother as a fitting tribute to an outstanding scholar who ranks among the very few academic specialists in Russian affairs.

Samuel Harper was the son of the first president of Chicago University. When his father came back from a trip to Russia in 1890, the enthusiasm with which he talked of his journey fired his son's imagination. On graduating in 1902, Samuel Harper decided to select Russian history as a field for advanced study. Off to St. Petersburg, at the age of twenty-three, he already knew Russian and had completed the fundamental academic training which later stood him in such good stead when he came to make sober analyses of problems which aroused the prejudices of his contemporaries.

A man like this found it easy to make friends. Before long he had contacts in all classes of Russian society. He would attend an official function in the morning, lunch with a member of the Duma, go on to visit a group of revolutionaries and spend the evening in high society. On "Bloody Sunday" in January, 1905, when five hundred workers were massacred for holding a peaceful demonstration, we find Harper running for his life before a Cossack troop, getting away, recovering his breath and going on to take tea with the American Ambassador! His work, however, was not confined to sightseeing. Even at this date he had begun to study Russian life in a systematic way, and his letters and recollections of that period are full of shrewd observations.

During the 1914-18 war, Harper returned to Russia, this time as semi-official adviser to the American Ambassador. He admits that many of his judgments made in this period proved false. He distrusted the Bolsheviks and was inclined to credit the charge that Lenin and Trotsky were active German agents—afterwards he was to certify as genuine some of the notorious Sisson documents supporting this allegation. Nevertheless, after the October seizure of power, he continued his studies. For a time he made no attempt to return to Russia, occupying himself with university work and with expert advice to the State Department.

At one point, Professor Harper was called as a witness by the King Committee of the Senate, which was investigating "Sovietism." His description of the procedure—typical of many Senate witch-hunts—reveals how such "probes" were used to poison American-Soviet relations.

> When my turn came to face questioning, I found myself giving not only an inadequate but sometimes even incorrect picture on a particular point, for I had to answer, "Yes" or "No" to loosely or stupidly worded questions.

One witness, Harper relates, produced a document he had brought out of Russia which he claimed was proof that the Soviets nationalised women as well as land. The document was a translation of a local newspaper item.

> But the witness failed to state that the newspaper was an anarchist sheet and that the alleged decree was planted on the Bolsheviks by the anarchists in a local election campaign. Thus, through the Senate Committee, this alleged decree on the nationalisation of women was planted on the American public with lasting effect.

In 1926, Harper made his first trip to the Soviet Union. Taking up his old connections and making new ones with Soviet officials, travelling through the Ukraine, studying the Communist Party machine and the Soviet system at work, he produced a book on civic training which is still a valuable record of that stage of Soviet development and was recognised as such by *Izvestia*.

His switchback life between the social extremes trained Harper to become an extremely astute observer. Just before the outbreak of this war—and during its early years—he became a staunch advocate of American-Soviet friendship on the grounds of national interest, just as he had once opposed recognition for the same reasons. He was particularly strong in his denunciation of appeasement and in his support for Soviet foreign policy. But his enthusiasm never tempered his honesty. His comments on the Soviet system are the more valuable since they give both sides of the picture. Nobody can read this excellent autobiography without feeling affection for its modest author and gratitude for his work.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

AN IMPORTANT EDITION

W. A. Mozart: The Last Ten String Quartets. Edited by ALFRED EINSTEIN. *Novello.* 31*s.* 6*d.*

Where the works of composers of the classical and baroque eras are concerned, the main task of the present-day scholar consists in repairing the harm, the impertinences and "improvements," introduced by nineteenth century editors. The self-confidence of those gentlemen was seldom justified, since it hardly ever reposed upon a sense of style—any style, that is to say, other than the one which was current in their own day. So we have editions of sixteenth century vocal music "corrected" according to rigid thorough-bass principles; editions of Bach brought into line with classical harmony; editions of Beethoven with all the rugosities smoothed out; editions of Chopin in which the daring harmonic irregularities were so altered that the result should not bring a blush to the cheek of Ebenezer Prout. "Oh! he can't have meant that!" Down went the pen and out went the accidental or whatever. Of course there were exceptions: truly clever musicians like Liszt and Joachim who saw that nonsense had been made of such and such a passage and went to the original MS. to discover what the error was.

Dr. Einstein is a most reliable scholar, and I think one may safely regard this edition as definitive. It is very important because every one of these quartets is a masterpiece and the editing, though in most cases the errors it corrects were not absolutely gross, establishes some fine musical points. Where there are but few notes a misplaced accent, a wrong phrasing, a note tied where the composer meant it to be repeated will have results as harmful as an altered epithet or a displaced comma in a piece of poetic prose. Mozart was an exquisitely logical composer

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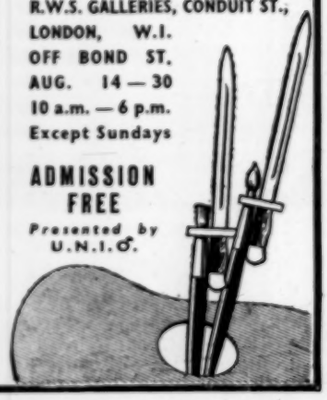

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and his style in these quartets is a miracle of consistency. But it was a consistency imperceptible to many nineteenth century editors, who could find the introductory Adagio to the C major Quartet (K 465) shockingly discordant. That famous page does, of course, offend against the canons of the academic counterpoint of those days; but it would be easy to find many a passage, especially in the operas and piano concertos, which place it beyond a doubt that Mozart here meant exactly what he wrote.

One suspects, however (and Dr. Einstein's preface enforces the suspicion), that Mozart was rather a careless proof-reader. Possibly he relied upon correcting mistakes in the performances he happened to hear, or himself took part.

In any case, it was the custom in the eighteenth century to be lax in these matters. Mozart, Dr. Einstein tells us, rarely employed the usual signs for *crescendo* and *decrescendo*, and it is therefore often difficult to be sure how far the written words are meant to extend. Accidentals were at that time only valid for the actual note they preceded: another trap for careless editors. Finally, the marks of interpretation are often difficult to determine as they are paramount:—

In the majority of cases Mozart contents himself with indicating the articulation at the first appearance of a motive, and leaves it to the player to make subsequent repetitions consistent.

Now, in the light of that remark, you now turn to the beginning of the development section of the first movement of the G major Quartet (K 387), and you will at once notice the importance of the staccato indication to the second violin, viola and cello, against the legato of the first violin, since it is clear that the effect of this will be most subtly different from that of the first announcement of the subject, where all the instruments are to play legato.

I have dwelt upon these technical points in order that musical people in general should be left in no doubt of the superior value and interest of this excellent and beautifully printed edition, which forms the latest addition to the publications of the Hirsch Music Library.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 812

Set by Roger Marvell.

War discredits the notion of pleasure, so that we now need to relearn its value. Six guineas are offered for decalogues inculcating pleasure in ten rhymed couplets. Entries by August 28.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 809

Set by William Whitebait

The usual prizes are offered for a poem, of not more than 24 lines, to celebrate the return of street lighting.

Report by William Whitebait

Except for one gentleman who sent in a lament, competitors tackled this competition straight: sentimentally or jauntily. There was a general sympathy for the lovers' loss of darkness, a sigh or two were dropped for the starry and moonlit nights, no townsman will henceforth enjoy; otherwise, rejoicing was unanimous—and one verse tended to resemble the next. The prizewinners, however, succeeded in making lively their expression of joy, and I recommend that a guinea each go to Sub-Lieut. J. R. Till, R. J. P. Hewison, H. S. Murray, and Allan M. Laing.

Black cats on the roof-tops are dancing fandangos,
Black sheep in the parks linger long over tangos,
And all of them haloed in Neon—for bang goes
The ban on street lighting.

They sat round a table and promised us freedom
From famine and fleas and from funk if we'd
heed 'em.
When up spoke a delegate: "Boys, we don't need
'em—
We need better lighting,"

The world was informed. From Chile to China
The people went mad and collapsed with angina,
And temples resounded throughout Asia Minor
With prayers for our lighting.

And now we're assured that the young can read
"Werther"
In lamplight "as bright as the stars in Alberta";
A hand-out? Come off it—yes, hand it to Goethe—
"*More* light—*more* lighting."

J. R. TILL

After five years' occultive gloom,
Once more the iron lilies bloom,
And we can walk at night
Streets newly washed in light.

It is not war's dread heraldry
That now illuminates the sky,
When over London glows
A gauze of gold and rose.

Nor is it some slow-falling flare
With spectral fluorescent glare
And pastel tint obscene
That makes the red cheek green.

Yet must our else too cloudless joy,
Some shadow of regret annoy.
Too oft the lamplight falls
On gaps where once were walls.

And on the city's dingy plate
No move will, unadulterate,
The moon's clean acid sketch
A jet and silver sketch.

Securely now the townsman bars
With his terrestrial, Heaven's stars,
Keeping the dark at bay
A brief arm's-length away.

R. J. P. HEWISON

THE LIGHTS RETURN

Far up, above the kindly glare
That lights the gulf of street below,
I wake, and sleep, and wake again
And see an imaged window pane
Cast on my wall its mimic glow.

Controlled within its framing square
Of shadow bars and curtained net,
With light so delicate and gay
Amid the night's faint, dreaming grey—
Serene and still, it says: forget!

The muffling dark, the lifeless air,
The droning Fate's uneven roar,
The heart's sharp catch, the search-light's arc,
The furious guns' defending bark—
These things shall break your rest no more.

H. S. MURRAY

Too long our nights have lingered wholly dark,
Save for the pointed stars and rationed moon:
The prowling Ministry of Shadows, soon,
Control had taken of the vital spark!

But black has made and now must miss its mark:
Light-seekers need no longer queue for noon;
Now darkness is in short supply: a boon
Quite independent of the weather clerk.

The shining windows of our streets look out,
Where sinister dark shadows once hobnobbed,
On lamp-post sentinels, in helmets bright.

Their peaceful uniforms dispel all doubt:
The soldiers of the dark have been demobbed:
Behold the placid coppers of the light.

ALLAN M. LAING

Company Meeting

BEECHAMS PILLS

THE seventeenth ordinary general meeting of Beechams Pills, Ltd., was held on August 1 in London Sir J. Stanley Holmes, M.P. (chairman and managing director), presiding. The following is an extract from the chairman's statement circulated with the report and accounts:

The trading profit for the year ended 31st March, 1945, earned by the companies of the Beecham Group operating in the British Empire and in almost all parts of the world (Europe excepted for the time being), amounted to £2,501,642, as compared with £409,256 in the previous year. During the 5 years ended 31st March, 1945, the group's total contribution to the National Exchequer has amounted to over £7,000,000.

The export profits for the year ended 31st March, 1945, amounted to £375,726, as compared with £322,600 in the previous year, a result which represents a substantial increase in sales.

The directors propose that the name of the company shall be changed from Beechams Pills, Limited, to Beechams Group, Limited. The title of Beechams Pills, Limited, was appropriate when the company was originally registered, but today it is a misnomer, as the sale of the famous pills represents only 3 per cent. of the group's turnover.

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The report and accounts were unanimously adopted and the proposed change of name was approved.

Personal

MEMBER of New Statesmen Editorial staff urgently requires flat/sm. hse., pref. Regent's Park area. Box A1522.

NURSE and landworker on honeymoon seven days early Sept., require place to stay with good simple living; country or sea in the south. Box A1274.

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Personal—continued

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DOUGLAS Glass is now photographing abroad. His new studio will be opening in the autumn. Watch this column.

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